

inside SOCCER

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\$2



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Sydney coach 'stunned'

"I WAS absolutely stunned," said Sydney Cosmos coach Joe Watson after his club was sensationally left out of the new look Ericsson Cup.

"I'd like to know what was wrong with our bid - I thought it was absolutely fabulous."

Sydney Cosmos were one of the three Sydney clubs left on the sidelines after ASF Chairman David Hill announced the line up for next season's national league competition.

"We had a great bid," said Watson.

"And we really thought we were in because we spent the week running up to the announcement answering all of the ASF's questions."

"We were led to believe that we were in"

"We were led to believe that we were in, and this has really left me stunned."

"But we'll just get on with showing everybody what a progressive club this is."

"We've got some great people here and we're going to get there."

Watson has also hit back at the ASF's decision to allow Perth Glory in - even although they have no suitable home ground.

"How can they do that?" he asked, "we were even planning to play our bigger games at the Sydney Football Stadium while our other games would have been at Redfern."

"Redfern has a capacity of 17,000 with 5,000 seated - what's wrong with that?"

"How many Ericsson Cup games get crowds bigger than that?"

"We have to be honest about all this, and there seems to be different rules applied here."

Soccer Australia's decision has met with mixed reactions from the soccer fraternity (see full coverage in detail) although there has been general acclaim for the admittance of a team from Perth.

But the three Sydney clubs have been left stunned by the decision to leave them all out.

"It seems that we suffered because Carlton wasn't ready to come in," added Joe Watson.

"If that was the case why weren't we told?"

"There are a lot of unhappy people within our club - but that won't affect anything on the park."

"We've now got a league to win."

Negus Cornered in Soccer Row

by
Bruce Campbell

ASF Commissioner George Negus has found himself as the centre piece in an amazing row - after defending Socceroo skipper Paul Wade in a Sydney newspaper story.

Negus slammed Canberra Cosmos coach Mike Lyons who dumped Wade after his midfield star disobeyed a club directive not to take part in Melbourne's Australian Grand Prix.

"Paul was told by the club not to miss training," said Lyons.

"And he decided to disobey that, and as a result was dropped for our match against Adelaide City."

"As far as I am concerned, that's that."

"The matter is closed."

But in an article in *The Daily Telegraph-Mirror* George Negus accused Lyons of "having a short-sighted view of Australian soccer."

Some people in the game are incensed that Negus has used his profile to enter a matter which they see as purely a club concern.

One prominent soccer identity in Canberra has said: "George Negus should have kept his



MIKE LYONS: copped a media slap from George Negus

butt out of this - he is way out of line."

And even Paul Wade is concerned at the coverage the story has got saying: "I wish that it had been dealt with internally by Canberra Cosmos."

"Why did this have to hit the papers?"

"If they think I am wrong, then fine - discipline me, but why did they have to go to the press with the story?"

Australian soccer has once again shown its

amazing capacity to turn what could have been a first class promotion into a slanging match.

Had the ASF, through its Melbourne-based publicity firm, let the soccer media know what was happening the event could have received the blaze of publicity it deserved.

"I'll hit out at suggestions that I know nothing about the game," countered Negus from his office at *Foreign Corres-*

pondent, the highly rated ABC TV show.

"I've only been involved in the sport for about 45 years - other than that I don't know anything. But I'll defend Paul Wade against the type of negative criticism that he sometimes gets."

"If the critics had bothered to analyse instead of criticise then they would realise that in the last four internationals he has played in we have either won or not lost

when he was on the park. He is a fine ambassador for Australian soccer and people in the game have to be aware that he is helping to lift the profile of our sport."

In his short time as an ASF commissioner George Negus has striven to lift the public profile of the game - and, with his latest stance over the Socceroo skipper, clearly intends to let no-one stand in the way of his objectives.

"He should butt out - and stick to what he is good at"

FIFA GET TOUGH Player agent banned for life

FIFA HAS announced changes to its regulations regarding player agents which are intended to encourage local agents to officially register with their national associations.

The new regulations mean that Soccer Australia, from January

1, has been able to issue licences at a national level as well as issue its own regulations regarding player agents.

But, according to FIFA, a local agent can only act in transfers where "the clubs involved belong to the same association."

And in another change members of the Australian lawyers association can also act as agents - even without a licence.

So what is the difference between an agent and a "manager"?

According to one well know player agent in Australia that is easy - "about \$100,000".

"That's how much it costs to register with FIFA," he says. "And that is totally unrealistic in a country like Australia where the game isn't full time. How many transfers do they think come out of Australia? And why would anyone pay even

\$50,000 to become a local agent?

"How many transfers would you have to be involved with to make a living out of it?"

In the wake of FIFA's changes, supposedly done to encourage the registering of local agents, not one has bothered to register with Soccer Australia.

"We haven't had any player agents registering at all," said a Soccer Australia spokesman.

But in a show of force FIFA has withdrawn the licence of Norwegian agent Rune Hauge "indefinitely".

In a statement FIFA said: "After being

provisionally suspended in August Rune Hauge nevertheless carried on being involved with transfer transactions and thus surreptitiously attempted to circumvent the measures FIFA has imposed.

"FIFA's view is that

such behaviour was unacceptable.

"Hauge is the only one of the hundred licenced agents to have had their licence withdrawn."

Australian players who flaunt the FIFA regulations are liable for some fairly hefty measures including fines of up to \$25,000 and suspensions of up to 12 months.

Similarly Australian clubs who are found guilty of breaches in these regulations are also liable to suspension of officials, fines of up to \$50,000 and suspension from all football activities.

John White

NO STRIKE SocOz deny referee story

DESPITE a story in the m a s s circulation *Daily Telegraph-Mirror* to the contrary Soccer Australia has issued a statement denying that there is any possibility of a strike by Ericsson Cup referees.

In a prepared brief SocOz has said: "Ericsson Cup referees are not contemplating strike action as was reported in an article in the *Daily Telegraph* recently.

"Contrary to statements made in the article by an unknown source the facts are:

* that the levy on referees is paid by the Australian Soccer Referees Federation and not Soccer Australia. Furthermore, referees have been

granted an increase of 25% in match fees effective from 1 January 1996.

* referees receive a maximum fee of \$200 per game and a maximum game load of four per month, therefore it is not possible that some referees are owed more than \$2,000 as quoted by the unknown source.

* Additionally, the

claim that some referees are owed more than \$400 in travelling expenses is untrue.

Soccer Australia finds it disturbing that these facts were not verified with its office before going to print."

This season Ericsson Cup referees have been at the centre of more criticism than ever.

Despite the statement from SocOz one official told *Inside Soccer* that referees ARE owed monies although the nature of the federation's payment system is the culprit rather than an inability to pay.

"In the old days we were paid on the spot after a game," he said.

"But that was never a great idea because of the obvious association with being paid by a club.

"Now we are paid in stages throughout the season but I can't understand why we aren't paid on a weekly basis."

With charges of bringing the game into disrepute flying through the air thicker than planes over Sydney airport the referee was, understandably, reluctant to attach his name to this story - particularly in the light of the controversy created by our first issue last fortnight.

As *Inside Soccer* went to print referees' boss Gary Power was unavailable and another spokesman for the ASF declined to comment on the issue other than what was released in the prepared statement.

"The ASF isn't prepared to add anything to the story," he said.

"Everything we want to say is in the press release."

Gala Stallion a star



EX-LIVERPOOL Liverpool manager Graeme Souness has said that former Stallion Ufuk Talay is headed for major stardom after a series of impressive performances in his new club's first team.

Souness took Talay to his Turkish club Galatasaray during the off season.

Talay was discovered as a raw sixteen year old by then-Marconi coach Frank Arok.

He made a big impact in the Fairfield first grade side and looked headed for a big local future until he was snapped up by Galatasaray.

"Ufuk is going to be big star," said Souness.

"He has everything it takes to make it to the top.

"He has done well for me so far - and I expect really BIG things from him."

Souness is in his first season with the glamour Turkish club which is sitting just behind the front runners in the First Division title race.

Last year he spent some time in Sydney where he has a business partnership with former Socceroo, Brian Turner.

RADIO SWITCH

UTS Olympic fans will get a chance to tune in to live coverage of their side's away clash with Morwell Falcons this week because of a switch by *Match of the Day*.

"We had originally planned to call the Sydney United-Brisbane Strikers match," said programme manager, Cec Bucello.

"But because of the extraordinary high interest in UTS Olympic just now we decided to switch."

The call begins at 6.30pm on Saturday on the 88.7 FM waveband.

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Stunned Eagles

by
JOHN WHITE

us out of the new-look Ericsson Cup is a puzzle. Sydney is that there is now no way back for the one-time successful NSL side. Pundits are predicting that the club just doesn't fit the glamorous image required to be a success in the next decade. "When the club was dumped from the national league it wasn't because of bad debts or poor performance on the field," he said.

"We had an extremely successful side, and made the Top Six as well as winning the NSL Cup. 'Maybe we didn't fit the 'nice image' which was required at the time - but we certainly took steps to change that. 'Everything which could have been done was - and I just can't believe what has now happened.

"Clubs like Morwell, Canberra, Wollongong and Melbourne Knights can't even come close to the sort of package we were putting together."

In the last few years big name clubs like St George, APIA, Leichhardt and Preston have all been given the big door as the Ericsson Cup struggles for financial viability. And Parramatta Eagles now face a hard struggle to convince the powers to be that they should be given another chance.



NICK ORLIC - once a star with Parramatta Eagles but now one of the many players to have left the Granville club since they were dumped from the Ericsson Cup.

He's chuffed

LAST week referee Gordon Dunster was in the headlines - but now he's delighted that his plight has been noticed.

"I've been asked to referee NSW Super League matches," said Dunster who can't get centres in the Ericsson Cup unless he hands in his FIFA linesman's badge.

NSWSF President Peter Gray confirmed that his association had approached Dunster after reading *Inside Soccer*.

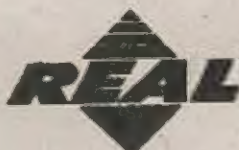
"Gordon is a good referee," said Gray and we are delighted to offer him games in the Super League."

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Straight SHOOTING

with
Bruce Campbell



WHEN DOES a sport cross the line of entertainment and into the realms of unsporting behaviour? For me the answer is quite clear - anything which causes enjoyment for one set of fans, and of course players, without deliberately provoking the others is pure entertainment, anything else isn't.

Fair enough, nothing too controversial in that - and, heaven knows, that anyone who reads my editorials knows that I'm NOT the controversial sort BUT - I've just read the latest from FIFA - and they're at it again. I'm fed up to the eyeballs seeing Aussie players getting booked for crossing the bye line to celebrate scoring. I know that it is a FIFA edict and is meant to stop any crowd trouble but, really, all that the players are doing is running to their own fans.

And if it is good enough for Australian football then why can't the same spoil-sport rule apply to the English and Italian games as well. Anyone who watches those leagues on TV will tell you that you could do a cartwheel behind the goal at White Hart Lane or the San Siro and get away with it.

So what about the now-famous corner flag samba or field-train that some teams have turned into mini works of art?

These pieces probably get as much attention at practice as corners and other set pieces do - and some of them are really brilliant. And they are fun - for everyone.

I always thought that it was a bit of FIFA double dealing that a player could get booked for running over the line but nothing happens if he dances with the corner flag.

Well, now FIFA are turning their attention to that as well, although they are leaving it up to the referee's discretion.

Come on, Smurfs of Zurich - you tie the refs up inside out in red tape and rules, take away any real discretion they have and now you are copping out of it by tossing it back in their faces.

And just to make it even harder for them to gain experience FIFA has announced the official reduction of entry to the FIFA list to the age of thirty nine.

THIRTY NINE - what kind of experience is anyone going to have by that age?

Maybe the time isn't that far off that someone is going to take the world governing body to the Court of Human Rights for discrimination against age.

And if that sounds stupid what about Marc Bosman - that has really sorted out our ancient and stupid anti-social transfer strangulation rules.

Me, I love it when a striker smashes the ball into the back of the net and runs past the goal line with his arms outstretched. But then I also love the trains and flag dances. Maybe I'm just one of those trouble makers who only goes along to a match for a bit of fun - and we all know that that won't do. I suppose that we can all hope that the referees really do use their discretion, that seems to be our only glimmer.

Sometimes I think that I go over the top with my criticisms of FIFA - at least that's what *Studs Up* seems to think.

But turn to the back page of their latest newsletter; there they have a spot which says "many happy returns to the personalities in world football" and then goes on to list such luminaries as Poul Hyldgaard, Abdullah K Al-Dabal and, of course, good old Sepp himself. What about the players - they're the real personalities, not some stuffy old pen pusher patting himself on the back from some fantasy league in Zurich.

John White's IN OFF THE POST

Dear Paul

On the 25th of February South Melbourne played Brisbane Strikers and on that day it was also Paul Trimboli's birthday.

Could you please print a little message for Paul from his very good friend and fan.

"To Trimmers, born 25/2/69 wishing you a happy 27th birthday. We hope that you're birthday was as special as you are to your fans and me Lots of love Always & Forever your number one fan

Jenny Arvanitis
- Melbourne

Mystery Writers

I've always thought that most magazines and papers made their letters up - but *Inside Soccer* takes the biscuit.

How do you manage to get two 'letters' in your very first issue?

But hats off, a fantastic paper.

Willie Taylor
Bondi Junction

(That's not hard, Willie - you see, we publish *THREE* football magazines as well.

But you're right about the paper - so you're saved, for this week ..

Maybe the kind of magazines that YOU normally read print made up letters, but the soccer press, *tsk, tsk*. - John White)

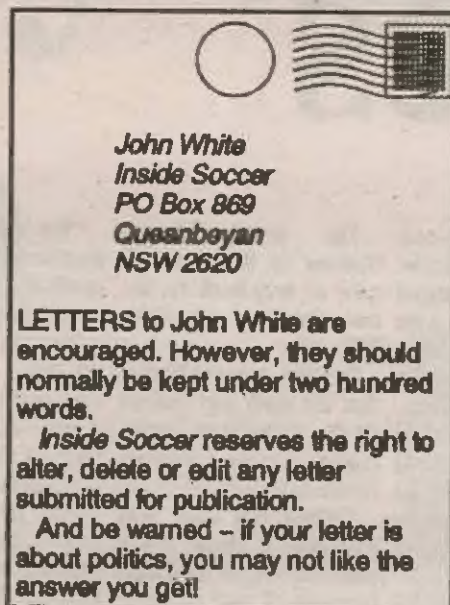
Waste Of Money

I have been going to Marconi Stadium for many years but I have to say that the two boys we got from Sydney United are garbage, Hristodoulou and Stanton are surely the two worst defenders in the league.

J Constanzo
Bonnyrigg

(Where do we get them, honestly. Joe, you must be BLIND.

The reason why Sydney United are



struggling is because you raped their defence when Marconi signed the dazzling twosome.

For my ten cents Hristodoulou has got one of the best crosses in the league, and a shot like a mule, while Robbie Stanton is a touch of class.

But the best is still to come from both of them. - John White)

Ripper, Rita

The first issue of *Inside Soccer* was an absolute ripper.

I haven't bought an Australian soccer paper for a couple of years but was given yours by a friend at a Sydney United home game.

It took me three days to read it - and then I read it over again.

Keep up the standard and by the way, I LOVED the story about Gordon Dunster.

Rita Savage
Wentworthville

(I don't think Gordon or the other refs were all that happy with our headline, but what the heck! - John White)

Oh, No!!!!!!

Why do we have to have two teams from West Sydney - and now they are talking about bringing in Parramatta, which

would make three.

Wake up ASF, one is enough.

Jimmy Bryson
Casula

(You must be a fan of ABSW's letters pages.

I suggest that you send them this type of drive.

Why two or three, how about bigger crowds - or do you like your football in front of two men and a dog as long as it is 'anglo'?

Give me a break - JW)

YES - we ARE rude

I thought that a great paper, your first issue of *Inside Soccer*, was ruined by your reply to John Harvey's letter.

He raises some interesting points, why do you have to be so negative?

Keep up the great stories, but cut out the rudeness.

Mrs Catherine Hill
Balgownie

(WHAT interesting points, that we should all change our names because some twit sitting in an office doesn't like them.

Negative - we gave John over 60 column centimetres to air his points, do you call that negative?

Our Advertising manager calls it bloody extravagant.

Anyway at least you are right about a couple of things, Catherine. I am rude - and it was a great first issue! - John White)

Australia Cup

Please send me information on the forthcoming Australia Cup youth tournament to be held in Sydney during the 1996 July school holidays.

I currently coach a 14 year Belnorth First Division side and would be happy to compete at this tournament.

Clive Hopkins
Canberra

Inside Soccer's launch at Bankstown's Rydges Hotel



Spotlight on South Africa

by
Mark Gleeson
Editor of
South Africa's
Kick Off

A World Game Special

FOR the first time ever, the African Cup of Nations in South Africa included 16 finalists (although Nigeria's withdrawal reduced the number to 15) – and represented another leap forward in African football.

The 20th African Cup of Nations marked a turning point in African football for a variety of reasons.

The move to an increase in finalists was symbolic of the importance of the tournament as a competition that has now found a place amongst the top footballing events in the world.

It had exactly the same format as the European Championships – which also increases its numbers to 16 finalists this year – and is now bigger than the continental championships in Asia, South America, Oceania and the CONCACAF region.

That more than 400

international journalists were on hand to watch the opening game of the 1996 Nations Cup in Johannesburg was further proof of the event's growing stature.

Television viewing audiences around the world reached into millions, providing a further window on the cream of African talent.

Action from the tournament was shown in Australia, Brazil, USA, throughout the Gulf and all over Europe.

The Cup of Nations, of course, has been helped in no small measure by the growing band of influential Africans finding their way into the leading European leagues.

Players like George Weah, the current FIFA World Player of the Year, and Abedi Pele in Italy, Anthony Yeboah in England; Akwa in Portugal and the Nigerian duo of Findi George and Nwankwu Kanu of Ajax Amsterdam have done wonders to create an exciting profile for Africa.

Only the two Nigerians were missing from the Cup of

Nations in South Africa from that list.

Then there was the spectre of South Africa, a country isolated from international soccer for close to thirty years, but now finding its place among the footballing elite of Africa, and of the world.

South Africa, ironically, was a founder member of CAF in 1956 and was invited to send a team to the first-ever Cup of Nations a year later.

But the South African officials refused to send a mixed team and so the struggle against apartheid in sport was born.

CAF expelled them from the competition and later from the Confederation.

FIFA followed suit with a suspension in 1964 and final expulsion 12 years later when still no progress had been made on eradicating discrimination in South African soccer.

For decades, no South African team appeared on the world stage and the country's top footballers were cut off from any opportunity of showing their skills to a wider audience.

It was only after FIFA

president Joao Havelange and General Secretary Sepp Blatter visited South Africa in April 1992 that the isolation ended and within six months South Africa were playing in the qualifiers for the 1994 African Cup of Nations in Tunisia.

Now the whole circle has been completed with South Africa's hosting of the competition – and their first ever appearance in the finals.

Now no longer will the Cup of Nations be a small-scale tournament, bereft of its top players and largely ignored by the world.

African soccer has arrived in a big way over the last decade – and the African Cup of Nations is reaping the rewards.

Not even the belated withdrawal of Nigeria, the winners of the previous edition in Tunisia in 1994, could detract from the significant progress.

On the other hand, their absence admittedly did take some off the gloss off the event.

But there were others to take the place of the Nigerian stars, not least



☐ SOUTH AFRICAN President Nelson Mandela; his name has become synonymous with freedom in sport and he was on hand to see his 'rainbow' team take out their first ever African Cup of Nations, as Mark Gleeson tells.

PHOTO: Allsport

the AC Milan striker Weah, leading war-ravaged Liberia into the finals for the first time.

Liberia's qualification, and that of near neighbours Sierra Leone, was an example of what can be achieved in the name of football.

Liberia has been wrecked by six prolonged years of civil war, most of it brutal and devisive.

Yet when the national soccer team played in the qualifiers and in their opening matches in Durban, the whole

country dropped its arms and forgot about the horrors of war.

"I wish there was a soccer match involving the Liberian team every day because that's the only way Liberians forget about their factional loyalties and rally behind the flag," said Liberian sports minister Francois Massaquoi.

Weah has played a prominent part in using soccer – and the African Cup of Nations – to promote peace.

On the field he helped

the Lone Stars to win their debut match at the final competition, just as hosts South Africa had done, too, in their first ever appearance at the African Cup of Nations finals.

Some 75,000 people packed the imposing Soccer City in Johannesburg to watch a crushing 3-0 defeat of Cameroon.

South Africa has arrived ... and the African Cup of Nations, too.



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INTERNATIONAL YOUTH TOURNAMENT
Sydney July 1996

FULL DETAILS IN NEXT ISSUE OF *Inside Soccer*

Thommo's Tartan Torment

ONCE UPON a time Eddie Thomson would have gasped in horror at the thought of Australia beating Scotland - but now, in the sort of ironic twist which is commonplace on the football field, he finds himself on the other side of the goalposts from the country of his birth.

He knows that a win is part of Scotland's warm up plans as they plan their own invasion, across the English border in an attempt to do some damage in the European Championships.

For Thomson it's a chance to earn more credibility in the country where he first made his name as a tough nut defender for Hearts.

Since those days his own playing career took him to the USA where he played in the old US pro league for San Antonio Thunder.

"That was how I eventually came to Australia," he recalled.

"When I was with San Antonio one of my team mates was Bobby Moore.

"And when the Australian NSL kicked off he got invited by Sydney City to come and play.

"Bobby couldn't make it but he recommended me instead."

Now, Thomson has

Scots born coach plotting to bring the Jocks down



The Australian bench - now with an eye to Scotland's famous Hampden Park

the hard yards to do as he plans to not only score against the Scots - but win.

But in FIVE meetings

with Scotland, Australia has only scored ONE goal, never mind beat them.

The closest that

Australia ever came to that first win was in the Melbourne leg of a World Cup eliminator a decade ago.

That night every Australian watching thought that had John Kosmina's header gone in, instead of Jim Leighton pulling off a brilliant save, things

might have been different.

One man who was at that game, in a dark blue shirt, scoffed at that one.

"Oh, that save," recalled Scottish midfielder genius Graeme Souness vaguely when asked to recall the game.

Swedes gave us a lesson

AUSTRALIA'S recent games against Sweden were in complete contrast to the 1992 encounters between the two countries.

Then, Australia was always in command and beat Sweden far more convincingly than the narrow scorelines (a 0-0 draw and two 1-0 wins) in the matches reflected. The 1992

matches were also Eddie Thomson's tenth, eleventh and twelfth full internationals as coach - and represented his first ever victories against European opposition.

Six of the players used in that first 0-0 draw in Sydney in January 1992 are no longer in contention for a place in the starting

AUSTRALIA'S POSSIBLE TEAM

Goalkeeper;
Mark Bosnich (Aston Villa)
Defenders;
Ned Zelic (Eintracht Frankfurt)
Tony Popovic (Sydney United)
Tony Vidmar (NAC Breda)
Steve Horvat (Hadjuk Split)
Craig Moore (Glasgow Rangers)
Midfielders;
Robbie Slater (West Ham United)
Stevie Corica (Wolverhampton)
Aurelio Vidmar (Sion)
Forwards;
Graham Arnold (NAC Breda)
Mark Viduka (Zagreb)

Thomson is likely to adopt a 5-3-2 formation using Zelic at the back as sweeper with Horvat and Popovic in central defence and Moore and Tony Vidmar overlapping as flank defenders. A midfield of Slater, Corica and Aurelio Vidmar would add the mobility which could trouble Scotland while Arnold and Viduka up front would test most defences.

For The Record

1967 Scotland B Team Australian Tour

Australia 0 Scotland 1

(28 May 1967, Sydney att: 34,750)

Fuzes, Nuttall, Marnoch, Watkiss, Cook, Warren, Hughes, Westwater, Giles (Giacometti), Baartz, Blue.

Australia 1 Scotland 2

(31 May 1967, Adelaide att: 12,500)

Rorke, Shepherd, Marnoch, Cook, van Blerk, Hughes, Watkiss, Westwater, Giacometti, Baartz*, McMeechan (Blue).

Australia 0 Scotland 2

(3 June 1967, Melbourne att: 22,000)

Fuzes (Rorke), Shepherd, Marnoch, Rice, van Blerk, Hughes, Watkiss, Westwater, Abonyi, Warren, Morrow (Giacometti).

1985 World Cup Eliminator

Scotland 2 Australia 0

(25 October 1985, Glasgow att: 35,000)

Greedy, Yankos, Davidson, Ratcliffe, S O'Connor (Dunn), Jennings, Watson (Patikas), Murphy, Crino, Kosmina, Mitchell.

Australia 0 Scotland 0

(20 November 1985, Melbourne att: 30,000)

Greedy, Yankos, Davidson, Ratcliffe, Dunn (Farina), Jennings, Patikas, Crino (Odzakov), Murphy, Mitchell, Kosmina.

line-up (Zabica, Gray, McCulloch, Petersen, Edwards and Durakovic) while three others (Zelic, van Blerk and Bernal) are now playing full time football in Europe.

But maybe the biggest single change over the four years was the comprehensive way that the Swedes simply outplayed Australia.

Vastly under-rated and criticised by the Australian media before their arrival because of the 'Sweden' only look to their squad, the World Cup silver medalists gave

Australia two hidings that they won't forget for a long time.

Forget the 0-0 scoreline in the Sydney match, Sweden played Australia ragged for 150 minutes of football.

It was like going back to the sixties when Australian sides were used to playing on the back foot all of the time.

The two game series may also be the signal for a changing of the guard with Eddie Thomson now under media pressure over his selections.

-Bruce Campbell



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"Honestly, there was never a danger that Australia would score three against us - and that is what you had to do."

"Maybe one, but three - no way."

And ironically, Jim Leighton may well be back between the posts to thwart the Aussies once more.

The 37-year-old has gone through a career revival since being dumped by Manchester United on the eve of Italia '90.

Now the veteran keeper is playing out of his skin for Hibernian and has managed to keep his spot as Scotland's number one.

Thomson had originally planned to use only his overseas based stars for this game but is now considering taking over two or three Ericsson Cup players.

He has already penciled in the name of Sydney United's stopper, Tony Popovic.

There are several big name Australians playing in Europe and they should all figure prominently in his plans.

In fact, Thomson has an embarrassment of defensive and goal-keeping cover and with nearly thirty Aussies with full time contracts in Britain alone he has plenty to choose from.

The change in FIFA rules which now allows the ASF to call up players for friendlies also gives Thomson's hopes a boost.

But maybe one player who will certainly grab a starting berth is Glasgow Rangers defender, Craig Moore.

Moore can play at full back or sweeper; or even in central defence so gives Thomson plenty of option.

It is likely that his appearance would capture the headlines in football crazy Glasgow with the venue now being fixed for the famous Hampden Park.

Thomson has the dilemma of how to shuffle Tony Vidmar, Ned Zelic, Jason van Blerk, Steve Horvat, Tony Popovic and Craig Moore to get his best possible format.

It is a dilemma that the Socceroo coach hasn't experienced for some time.

This time it is a question of who to leave out for the big March 27 clash, a game which will be televised live on SBS in the early hours of the 28th Australian time.

And Eddie Thomson, the Socceroo coach is certain to be on the winning side no matter what the final score is.

Ned Zelic; My big turnabout

by
BEN REID

Sunday, May 24, 1992.

The Olyroos trail Holland 2-1 two minutes from the end of extra time, needing a draw to qualify for the 1992 Olympic Games.

Captain Ned Zelic holds the ball up half a metre from the dead-ball line, presented with the option of a cross or a near-impossible shot.

He takes the shot, and as the ball slips between the stunned goalkeeper and goal post into the back of the net, is propelled to instant soccer stardom.

It's the goal Zelic lists as his greatest sporting moment - a second of genius that heralded the arrival of one of Australia's brightest talents to the world stage.

But what followed? Was the virtuoso performance we saw against Holland, and in the all-too-rare Socceroo appearances since, the best of Ned Zelic?

He has already experienced the highs and lows of European football, but now, embarking on a fresh beginning with German first division club Eintracht Frankfurt, is confident that his best is yet to come.

"I'm only 24, so should have another 10 years left at the game," he said.

"I've still got a lot to learn, and a lot of time in which to develop."

"I've always said that my long term aim is to play to my potential."

"Once I achieve that then anything can happen."

"A major goal of

"My time at Queens Park Rangers was more than unhappy - it got to the point that there was no point in staying"



mine is helping Australia to the World Cup finals.

"Italy is where the best players are going, and would have to be a goal of mine also, but at the moment I'm content in Germany."

Contentment, both on and off the field, is something that has been missing from Zelic's game in recent times.

A series of frustrating knee-injuries with Bundesliga champions Borussia Dortmund was followed by an even more frustrating transfer to English

Premier League club Queens Park Rangers.

Back in the Bundesliga with Eintracht Frankfurt, Zelic is now 100 per cent fit, and just as importantly, is now enjoying his soccer.

"My time at Queens Park Rangers was more than unhappy - it got to the point that there was no point in staying," he said.

"I'm now back in Germany where I was so happy to start with."

"After being out injured for a long time it has taken a while to get back into things, but everything's going well now and I'm making up for lost time."

When out-of-form and out-of-favour at QPR, Zelic only had to think back to the advice he once received from current UTS Olympic

assistant coach Steve Darby for inspiration.

"The best advice I ever received came from Steve, who told me to aim high and be patient."

"When things don't work out your way you have to keep going and turn it around," he said.

With Zelic securing a starting position as sweeper, Eintracht Frankfurt have climbed into 10th position on the points table, but with only 13 games remaining in the season, are well out of contention for the title.

"We're still trying to make the top five so that we can play in Europe next year, but the odds are against us," said Zelic.

But Zelic is patient, and one gets the feeling that he has already turned things around.

Aussie stars in Euro country row

EXPAT Socceroos Robbie Slater and Graham Arnold have opened up a real can of worms by claiming that they were forced back to Australia by the Australian Soccer Federation to play in the recent two game series against Sweden.

Speaking on Galaxy TV's *Premier Goals* programme Robbie Slater said candidly that SocOz had forced him into coming back for the two games.

The flame haired midfielder star had already said at press conferences that his English club, West Ham United, was reluctant to let him go but had played down any suggestion that any pressure was put on him to actually play.

A lot of the controversy around Slater stems from the fact that he was on the West Ham injured list and although he didn't play in the first match in Brisbane the Hammers were concerned that he took the pitch in the Sydney international still unfit.

"I have to get a medical certificate declaring me fit," said Slater.

"We were expected (by the ASF) to be in Australia - it was not longer a request."

But Slater apparently confirmed to national coach Eddie Thomson that he WOULD be available for the games - some months ago.

Clearly Slater is in trouble with his club who are fighting for survival near the foot of the Premier League while Arnold fears that, at 32, he may lose his place.

"What happens if I go back and the coach (says) you're wanting to go back to Australia all the time and at the end of this year we're not going to renew your contract," he said.

"And I'm 32."

But Arnold has had a stand-out season at Dutch First Division side NAC Breda and there seems little chance of him losing his contract.

It appears that SocOz invoked a FIFA ruling which states that international players must be released for a minimum of seven matches per year.

The two game series against Japan was a flop at the box office which was no doubt the underlying reason why the national body wanted at least two big name drawcards back.

Goalkeeper Zeljko Kalac was in an entirely different position from the other two overseas-based stars as he was out of contention at Leicester City and his transfer to Wolves hadn't been completed.



Graham Arnold: contract fears over Oz trip

Goals are goals, says United hot gun



EVERY STRIKER goes through one, a goal drought that is, but when it happens United hot shot Ante Milicic has the answer.

"Go straight for goals," he says.

"Branko Culina has encouraged me to go straight for goals instead of trying to go around the defenders.

"When I'm one on one with a defender now I'm getting past them and the next step from there is to get a shot on target.

"When you get it on target then anything can happen."

Ante Milicic is one of the most exciting talents in Australian soccer but with everyone screaming out for more goals he is also put under the microscope and expected to bang them away every game.

He burst on the big time scene with outstanding performances in the 1993 World Youth Cup and at one stage looked to be set for a big money move to German club, Borussia Dortmund.

But after successful trials he decided to play his football in the Ericsson Cup with Sydney United - putting on hold an overseas contract.

Meanwhile his Youth team strike partner Paul Agostino moved from Swiss side Young Boys to Bristol City.

Agostino's move hasn't been the success that he had hoped and there is talk that he could be on his way back to Australia to link up with South Melbourne.

Milicic, was more the provider in

that partnership and has never been a prolific scorer although he managed a hat trick in United's 4-1 romp against South Melbourne.

That hat-trick also boosted Milicic's confidence but he still hasn't managed to silence his critics who suggest that he should be scoring with abandon.

"I love playing for this club," he counters.

"We're looking for a strong finish to the season and we plan to peak in the second half of the season.

"We want a strong run home so that we can secure the best possible finish in the league.

"But the boys at Sydney United like playing for each other and you can see that in the chances that we do create.

"With the kind of pace that we can turn on we can open up defences."

At the end of the day it doesn't make any difference to the team how the goals are scored or who scores them - as long as they go in.

"That's right," adds Ante Milicic, "any goal is a good one."

This season Milicic has shown flashes of his 1993 form, something which saw his call-up into the Australian Olympic squad for the Oceania qualifiers in Adelaide.

Now he looks a good bet to make the squad for the CONCACAF eliminators - with the next step USA, and maybe the platform for another crack at the lucrative European market.

SocOz announce the 1996/97 Ericsson Cup format - but is there really

Any Change?



THIS will give soccer the opportunity to be the only genuinely national football code with teams representing all of the states, territories and capitals around Australia."

With those opening words ASF Chairman David Hill announced the inclusion of Perth Glory and Collingwood Warriors into next season's Ericsson Cup competition.

Despite what Hill claimed to be "an embarrassment of riches with some fantastic bids" it looks

more to be a case of 'nearly as you were' for soccer.

The only new team is Perth Glory, and that is a long overdue acceptance of the fact that Western Australia actually is part of the country, while Collingwood looks to be little more than Heidelberg in a partially new coat.

Hill's obvious ignorance of the fact that Tasmania and the Northern Territory (Darwin) form part of this great country were lost on the stunned press conference which

WHO MADE THE DECISION

Chairman David Hill led the committee which decided on the format for next season but also involved in that policy making were Peter Gray (President NSWFF), Basil Scarsella, George Negus, George Vasilopoulos, Don di Fabrizio, David Woolley (CEO) and Sue Baker-Finch.

Of that list only Gray, Scarsella (from South Australia), Di Fabrizio (Morwell Falcons) and Vasilopoulos (the South Melbourne president) have any long-time knowledge of football at the top level.

Peter Gray is also the only one to have ever played first class football.

was summoned for this historic announcement.

"Carlton have at their

own request asked that their bid be considered only for the 1997 season," continued Hill, "has been accepted and this was a fantastic bid. The one sad note in all of this was that there were some terrific bids and not everyone could get in."

Carlton's bid is believed to be a foil for the Melbourne Italian community and news from our southern correspondent after the announcement was that the reality of the situation is that Thomastown and Bulleen will likely form the basis of the Carlton bid. So, other than the brilliant admittance of Perth Glory there is really nothing new on the horizon.

A slap in the face was given to the only truly new Eastern state bids; Sydney Cosmos and Manly Seahawks.

Another fresh approach had come from Auckland but the Kiwis pulled out in the lead-up to the announcement.

It had widely been predicted that there would, in fact, be sixteen clubs but it seems that the withdrawal of Carlton

COMMENT

I SAID it last week on Sydney radio and I'll say it again - for God's sake, give us some consistency.

Ever since the national league kicked off in 1977 there have been major changes every single season.

The game needs consistency to first consolidate its position and then to expand on that base.

Last winter we were told that there wasn't enough talent in Australia to field 14 Ericsson Cup teams; now, apparently with the admittance of another two clubs, there is.

We have also seen a bold new list of criteria for membership to the Ericsson Cup - but the admittance of at least one team which will play its games on a cricket pitch and the other, who knows where, is a real concern.

Would any of the existing twelve get away with a move to a cricket ground?

I very much doubt it.

Would any of the existing twelve get away without adequate floodlights?

I know they wouldn't.

We are now back in the same old position whereby some clubs are being favoured in the application of the criteria.

That is not right. Big league soccer should not be run as some sort of 'Jolly Boy Club' - rules are meant to be applied to everyone with equal fairness.

But of even greater concern is the news that Perth will play its games in the afternoon.

That is a disgraceful decision and this paper will campaign long and hard throughout the winter to see that decision reversed.

In summer, it can easily hit the high thirties during a Perth afternoon - that is not a safe condition for our players to perform under.

It is unsafe but also makes a mockery out of the hard work done over the last two decades in getting the major clubs to upgrade their facilities.

Simply put, if Perth and Collingwood are unable to fulfil the conditions as set down by the ASF then THEY should be on the waiting list.

There have been great strides ahead by the majority of our clubs and the one positive to come out of the ASF's changes is that the existing twelve have been given a mandate for the next five years.

Now at least the league is on a solid footing and the old clubs, and the new, have a chance to consolidate their positions.

The expansion to 16 teams for the following season is also a sound move; giving Carlton the chance to get its house properly in order.

But if the 16th club is to come from Sydney then why couldn't that be named also?

Please, ASF leave the radical changes alone.

No more drastic changes, stick to your current policy and let us proceed on a business like basis.

In the meantime, how about an early decision on which Sydney club will get the nod in 1997?

How It All Looks

THE 1996/97 ERICSSON CUP

New South Wales
Marconi-Fairfield
Sydney United
UTS Olympic
Wollongong Wolves
Newcastle Breakers
Australian Capital Territory
Canberra Cosmos

Victoria

South Melbourne
Melbourne Knights
Morwell Falcons
Collingwood - NEW
South Australia
Adelaide City
West Adelaide

Queensland

Brisbane Strikers
Western Australia
Perth Glory - NEW

TOTAL: 14 clubs

1997/98 ADDITIONS

Victoria

Carlton

New South Wales

A 'Sydney club'

TOTAL: 16 clubs

from next season's race decided the fate of another Sydney bid.

It is likely that a 'sweetheart' deal was done with Sydney Cosmos although David Hill drew short of saying this.

Instead he said: "We ask that all of the clubs who were not fortunate in getting in to maintain their passion so that one of them might fill that vacancy."

It is difficult to understand Hill's assertion that the Sydney clubs didn't have adequate spectator facilities, considering that Cosmos were wanting to play at SFS while Parramatta had done a deal to play at Parramatta Stadium.

"But you would have to say that a Sydney club would be favourites to fill this other vacancy."

"It was an exhaustive day to go through all of these bids but in the end the decision (on the format of next season's Ericsson Cup) was a unanimous one."

Hill spoke at length about the 'opportunities to take soccer into the mainstream of Australian sport' by admitting the Collingwood Warriors but in a quick straw poll of Sydney based soccer officials this drew little support.

"Collingwood AFL club has openly stated that they expect to make money out of

soccer, not put it in," said one official.

"How can this be soccer taking advantage? Surely David Hill has just sold us out?"

"Frankly I am disgusted by all of this."

"We are asked to be more professional and my club has done just that. We have talked

openly about going full time professional but now we will lose three or four home games next season and because at least two of those could have been Sydney derbies, that amounts to about \$220,000 in gate takings. I don't see that as going forward."

"In fact I see little real change at all."

Despite, Hill's brave predictions about the future that also seemed to be the opinion shared by the majority of fans that *Inside Soccer* spoke to before and after the Sydney United-West Adelaide game.

But with no representation at all on the ASF board from any NEW based Ericsson Cup clubs there was little real chance of anything other than the outcome as it happened.

Now Sydney Cosmos, Parramatta Eagles and Manly Seahawks will have an anxious twelve month wait to see if David Hill's promise of a fourth Sydney club becomes reality.



VETERAN defender Martin Bourke gets up in a heading duel with South Melbourne. Now the Boys from Brandon are starting to put the respect back into their play.

All change at the 'Gong

by
Stan Green

IT WASN'T that long that things down at Brandon Park didn't look so clever.

Slumped on the bottom of the Ericsson Cup table, some drastic action was finally taken when coach Berti Mariani was replaced.

"Since then things have gone along really well," said a club official.

"Nobody would blame Berti, things just happened."

"But often in this game a new face is just the trick that is needed."

"So when Nick Theodorakopoulos came in, things have started to click."

"We haven't leapt up the table, or anything like that, but the lads seem to have found a new self-belief."

"Our last two games, which were both away, saw us go down by the odd goal in each."

"That wouldn't have happened just a few months ago."

This season midfielder Matt Horsley has often been the lone plugger but now the Wolves have brought in a few new

faces in youngsters Joe Vrkic, Mario Jermen, Ian Pollari and Paul Beltrame.

"Beltrame was unlucky enough to

break his ankle and will probably be out for the rest of the season."

"But the others have done well, particularly Mario Jermen."

"I can't understand why Sydney United let him go - but we aren't complaining because he has certainly scored good goals for us."

Now, the Wolves will be looking to consolidate before they start building again for next season.

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Steve Darby's WORLD of SOCCER

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THE World Youth Cup in Malaysia is over a year away and already an exciting crop of talented youngsters is coming through the ranks for Les Scheinflug to pick for his quest of a World Youth title. But before looking for the new talent it may be time to have a reflective look at 'where are they now' from the 1991 and 1993 World Youth Cup squads to see if those players have evolved into professional talent - which in reality is the true measure of a national development programme.

Portugal '91 World Youth Cup squad

Name & Club	1991	Honours
Bosnich (Aston Villa)	Man Utd	Olyroo/Socceroo
Spasevski (Preston)	Preston	Nil
Stojevski (Preston)	Preston	Nil
Babic (Sydney United)	Sydney Utd	Olyroo
Okon (Brugge)	Marconi	Olyroo/Socceroo
Poric (Sheffield Wed)	St George	Nil
Bingley (Marconi)	St George	Socceroo
Kindtner (Cercle Brugge)	Sunshine	Nil
Seal (Bristol City)	Marconi	Olyroo
Trajanovski (Olympic)	Preston	Nil
Corica (Wolves)	Marconi	Olyroo/Socceroo
Muscat (Sth Melbourne)	AIS	Olyroo/Socceroo
Popovic (Sydney United)	Sydney United	Olyroo/Socceroo
Maloney (Marconi)	AIS	Nil
Stanton (Marconi)	Sydney United	Nil
Silic (Melb Knights)	Melb Knights	Nil
Sorras (Olympic)	Olympic	Nil
Kalac (Sydney United)	Leicester	Socceroo

A TOTAL of 7 Socceroos, 7 playing professionally in Europe and only 2 not in the Ericsson Cup.

Australia '93 World Youth Cup squad

Name & Club	1991	Honours
Juric, F (Knights)	Melb Knights	Olyroo/Socceroo
Moore (Glasgow Rangers)	AIS	Olyroo/Socceroo
Holst (Marconi)	Marconi	Nil
Wingell (Perth Italia)	Perth Italia	Nil
Juric, A (Portugal)	Canberra Metros	Nil
Cranney, S (Brisbane)	Brisbane	Olyroo/Socceroo
Carbone (Nott Forest)	Perth Italia	Nil
Agostino (Bristol City)	Young Boys	Nil
Milicic (Sydney United)	Sydney United	Olyroo
Tsekenis (Olympic)	Olympic	Olyroo
Tsekinis (West Adelaide)	West Adelaide	Nil
Moric (Sydney United)	Sydney United	Olyroo/Socceroo
Macolino (W'gong)	Marconi	Nil
Trpceviski (Portugal)	Preston	Nil
Iocca (Marconi)	Marconi	Nil
Radecki (Altona)	Sunshine	Nil
Matassa (Leeds United)	Perth Italia	Olyroo

A TOTAL of 4 Socceroos and 6 playing professionally in Europe - only 2 players not in the Ericsson Cup.

OVERALL this is an excellent production rate as in the real world of football not every youth player is going to make it to the professional ranks for a variety of reasons such as injuries - or just bad luck.

Another reality of football is that if a young player wishes to develop he must evolve by progressing to a bigger club.

The players who have shown loyalty to sides not in the elite leagues have sadly declined in their status and it may be difficult to bridge that gap to the top as they get older.

As the game becomes more professional, the old factor of club loyalty is diminishing and loyalty to a contract is now the vogue.

A comparison of the Australian production line with other nations who competed in these tournaments is excellent with so-called first world countries in Europe such as England and Germany not having anywhere near the success of players making the transition to their national leagues.

Only Portugal, Brazil and Ghana can equal Australia and it is no coincidence that they are the more successful sides.

The 1997 squad, which is just in its embryonic stage, is already throwing up some exciting talent.

Already the following players who are eligible for Malaysia '97 have played in the Ericsson Cup or in Europe; Milosevic, Garcia (Canberra Cosmos), Zelic, Bove, Vallas, Paradisis (UTS Olympic), Simunic, Pondejak (Melbourne Knights), Zane, Richie, Thomas (Newcastle Breakers), Baser, Blatsis, Alsopp, Curcija (South Melbourne), Foxe (Ajax), Neill (Millwall), McDermott (QPR), Aloisi (Cremonese), Gjakovski (Wollongong).

Already a crop of talent which consists of excellent athletes who can play football and has already emerged into the Ericsson Cup.

There is not a shadow of a doubt that a few more players will pop up in the league and make this a possible squad than can obtain that elusive prize for Australia.

Try watching a few National Youth League games and see the quality of play that is evolving from it.



I'M NO DUFFER

Aussie skipper lashes back at TV critics

AUSTRALIAN captain Paul Wade has hit back at critics who have suggested that he is past his best.

"It's been going on for a while now," says the midfield hustler.

"I'm just fed up with people, who should know better, having a go at me.

"I've said it before - but when I'm good and ready then I'll hang up my boots.

"I don't need any journalist to tell Paul Wade when it's time to stop playing.

"But if Eddie Thomson decides to call it a day for me earlier than that is fine.

"He is the national coach and he plays who he wants to."

Wade, who is having a revival at his current club Canberra Cosmos,

is seemingly still in contention for his place in the national squad - and his captain's armband to go with it.

"Wadey can still do a job for me," said Thomson after the recent match against Sweden in Sydney.

"Against the Swedes he just ran his legs off," Thomson said last

further chapters in the record books by leading his side to the Intercontinental Championships if they can overcome Tahiti in July.

The big question mark remains as to whether he will even reach Riyadh next year, let alone the next World Cup.

respected journalist Tommy Anderson said that Wade was finished.

Anderson also labelled Adelaide City pair Alex Tobin and Milan Ivanovic, both of whom he claims are past their best.

But Wade, who is riding high on the Ericsson Cup goal-scoring charts with Canberra, may yet have the last word.

Already he has set a new record for A caps and now he has also topped Peter Wilson's long standing all-time Socceroo appearance record.

Now Paul Wade is set to defy media opinion as he carries on his Socceroo career - with his personal target being a place at the 1998 World Cup finals in France.

"I don't need any journalist to tell Paul Wade when it's time to stop playing."

year that he would review his captaincy in June but there is still a possibility that Paul Wade could write

The latest media assault on his position came on SBS's highly regraded *On The Ball* programme where

It's a young man's game says Bozza

Aussie 'keeper set for Scotland clash later this month

THEY say that keepers have to be crazy, although often I think that is something put out by the Goalies Union PR people to help protect their clients from rampaging

strikers.

But one thing that they do have to be in this modern game is fanatical.

Take Mark Bosnich, for example.

He is the consummate professional.

Yet his drive towards the top has taken him to the cold-climes of the English midlands where it is bad enough to be an outfield player, but

keeper - no thanks. Imagine throwing yourself about on those frozen pitches.

Still, he's in the best league in the world, and he's doing what he wants to do - playing professional football for English club Aston Villa and being freely acknowledged as the best keeper in Britain.

"The way that the modern game is going," he says,

"Ron's fault was that he was too loyal - if he hadn't been he would still be at Villa"

"makes it a young man's game.

"There isn't any doubt about that, it's a world wide trend.

"I'm still young and I've got a lot of potential to fulfil."

"Filling that potential has seen him tough it out at the top, coming back hard when the going would have been enough to frighten off most.

After making his first team debut for Manchester United he was kicked out of England by the immigration department.

Then his Australian club, Sydney United, gave him the chop in favour of Zeljko Kalac.

Allowed to buy out his own contract for a 'token \$15,000 he then got involved with a transfer scandal that he dodged by the skin of his teeth.

At the end of it he was the first team

choice for Aston Villa.

But trouble wasn't far behind him and after Villa had a scrappy season manager Ron Atkinson was given the bullet - and Bosnich found himself out of favour with the new boss, and on the bench.

"Ron's big weakness was his loyalty to some of the older players," says Bosnich.

"If he had got rid of them then I believe that he would have still been Aston Villa manager today.

"I used to watch Craig Johnston on TV at Liverpool when I was a kid of about fourteen and dream about playing in Europe.

"I always thought that that would be tremendous and being in England is everything that I ever dreamed about.

"England is very definitely the place to be at the moment.

Because of the money pouring into the game due to cable TV all of the best players are starting to come here.

"The money is immense and this is undoubtedly the toughest league in the world.

"My immediate future is in England."

But Bosnich hasn't given up his own international hopes with Australia.

"I get envious of the other players when they go off to play midweek internationals," he admits.

"That is one of the reasons why I am looking forward to the game against Scotland - playing against the Scots at Hampden Park will be just fantastic.

"And playing for Australia in a World Cup finals is still a major ambition of mine."

Bruce Campbell



MARK BOSNICH climbs high to clear his goal in an English Premier League clash.

Since going to England and establishing himself at Aston Villa the Sydney-sider has been rated as one of the best young goalkeepers in the world.

But he still calls Australia home and is looking forward to pulling on the goalkeeping version of the green and gold against Scotland.



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Kossie's Kids rampage

BREAKERS coach John Kosmina has unlocked the magic formula in Newcastle - and his young side has gone on a goal scoring spree in reply.

Four goals against South Melbourne, three against UTS

Olympic and FIVE against Canberra Cosmos is the kind of form which should see his team up at the top of the league - not struggling down in the basement.

"It's really a young side," says the former Soccerroo striker.

"And most of the players are locals.

"So it is inevitable that in a team like that we are going to cop a few bad ones as well.

"I wanted to bring the youth through this season and this is exactly what I've done.

"Maybe at the start of the competition things didn't look so good but now we are showing what we have. There is a lot of talent in Newcastle and I can't wait for next season."

This season twenty six year old striker Jason Bennett has hit his straps and is currently the Breakers top scorer.

Veteran skipper David Lowe is also showing a few of the touches that made him one of the league's best strikers, but more importantly is the experience which he can impart.

But things are definitely looking good at Birmingham Gardens.

For Kosmina that is ample reward for his graft and determination.

Despite smashing in five goals against Canberra the young Breakers side let them come back from being four goals down to snatch an incredible 5-5 draw - something which certainly didn't please Kosmina.

"He was kicking everything in sight in the dressing room," said one of his players. The trouble with us is that we get caught out going forward - sometimes we aren't disciplined enough as a side to get back and plug the holes in defence. But it is coming and I think the win against UTS Olympic was a real sign of what we can do."

"After we let Canberra come back from being four down he kicked everything that he could"

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2	Jason POLAK (Brisbane Strikers)
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2	Marko RUDAN (Sydney United)
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1	Paul DEE (Canberra Cosmos)
1	Bobby DESPOTOVSKI (Morwell Falcons)
1	Sean DOUGLAS (Morwell Falcons)
1	Steve FORSHAW (Wollongong City)
1	Aytec GENC (Sydney United)
1	Chad GIBSON (Sydney United)
1	John GIBSON (Adelaide City)

ROUND 23

Saturday 9 March

Brisbane Strikers 1 (Brown 46) Marconi-Fairfield 1 (Bingley 88)

Venue: Suncorp

Att: 6,048 Referee: G Connolly

BS: Bolton, Zoricich, Williams, Hunter, Farina, R Brown (Tollenaere 72), T Cranney, S Cranney (Ditton 33), Brayshaw, Battistin

MA: Catlin, de Marigny, Bingley, Casserly, Harper, Hristodoulou, Maloney (Renaud 70), Smith, Awaritefe (Zoric 63), Souris, Longo

Yellow Cards: MA - de Marigny, Longo.

Sydney United 3 (Rudan 1, Gibson 44, Plesa 86) West Adelaide 0

Venue: Croatian Sports Centre

Att: 2,798 Referee: C Diomis

SU: Perosh, Kupresak, Popovic, Enes (Plesa 82), Genc (S Babic 67), Markovac, Milicic (Lamond 64), Rudan, Patikas, Zdrilic, Gibson

WA: Blazincic, Alagich, Kokkinopitis, Slager, Hooker, Tibaldi, Aloisi, Tsekenis, Andrioli (Mezensof 45), Day, Thorp

Yellow Cards: SU - Popovic, Enes, Zdrilic, Gibson. WA - Thorp

Morwell Falcons 3 (Spink 16, Sevin 36, Tapai 62)

Wollongong City 2 (Jermain 82, 87)

Venue: Falcons Park

Att: 1,591 Referee: W Dade

MO: Kourtis, Marcina, Miller, Tapai, Sevin, Waddell,

Talladira, Masi, Reda, Spink (Bothwell 87), Douglas

WW: Hughes, Bourke (Laybutt), Horsley, Naumovski,

Perinich, Bonetig (Gjakovski 65), Jermain, O'Shea, Pollari

(Petratos 45), Ceccoli, Vrkic

Yellow Cards: MO - Douglas, Bothwell; WW - Vrkic.

Sunday 10 March

Adelaide City 6 (Hassell 11,90, Foster 21, 27, Mori 44, 65)

Canberra Cosmos 0

Venue: Hindmarsh Stadium

Att: 4,188 Referee: J Papanicolas

AC: Petkovic, Yates, Ivanovic, Tobin (Salapasis 53),

Mori, Hassell, Gibson (Brazzale 36), Lozanovski

(Costanzo 45), Armour, Mennillo, Foster

CO: Mautone, Watson, Dunn, Kelly, Armstrong (A

Popovich), Perinovic, Castro, Koch, Musitano, Mazis, N

Popovich

Yellow Cards: AC - Mori, Mennillo. CO - Dunn, Kelly,

Armstrong, Musitano

Melbourne Knights 1 (J Markovski 81) South Melbourne 1 (Curcija 73)

Venue: Croatian Sports Centre

Att: 7,140 Referee: E Lennie

MK: Juric, Buljubasic (Kutlesovski 75), de Amicis,

Cervinski, Marth, Simunic, Lapsansky, Tiatto (Nastevski

89), Kovacevic (Vojtek 46), J Markovski, T Pondeljak

SM: Petkovic, Blatsis, Kuzmanovic, Panopoulos, Trimboli,

Petersen, Knezevic, Curcija, Alsopp (Lewis 46 - Baser

84), Muscat, Petkovic, Oric

Yellow Cards: MK - Kovacevic. SM - Blatsis, Panopoulos,

Petersen, Muscat.

Red Cards: SM - Blatsis

Newcastle Breakers 3 (Pryce 64, Bennett 69, Zane 89)

UTS Olympic 0

Venue: Breakers Stadium

Att: 3,045 Referee: D Crawford

NB: Carter, Sanderson, Maier, Roberts, Halpin, Zane,

Bennett, Thomas, Pryce, Sprod, Richie.

SO: Bouhoutsos, Poimer (Edwards 70), Tsekenis,

Taliadoros (Bove 70), Tome, Trajanovski, Ardone,

Augerinos, Meredith, Blagojevic, Zelic (Sorris 37).

Yellow Cards: NB - Carter, Sanderson, Zane, Pryce. SO -

Tsekenis, Taliadoros, Ardone, Blagojevic

ROUND 19 deferred match

Wednesday 6 March

Morwell Falcons 0 Melbourne Knights 3 (Lapsansky 16, T Pondeljak 43, 49)

Venue: Falcons Park

Att: 1,190 Referee: J Fraser

MO: Kourtis, Marcina, Tapai, Sevin, Talladira, Masi,

Stergiopoulos (Spink 62), Villani (Bothwell 62), Reda,

Douglas, Craig

MK: Juric, Buljubasic (Nastevski 87), de Amicis, Cervinski,

Marth, Simunic, Lapsansky, Tiatto (Vojtek 76), Kovacevic,

J Markovski, T Pondeljak (Kutlesovski 68)

Yellow Cards: MO - Marcina. MK - Buljubasic

Tuesday 5 March

Adelaide City 2 (Mori 9, 38) Newcastle Breakers 1 (Bennett 18)

Venue: Hindmarsh Stadium

Att: 2,105 Referee: W Dade

AC: Petkovic, Yates, Ivanovic, Tobin, Mori, Hassell, Lozanovski, Armour, Mennillo (Salapasis 71), Brazzale (Costanzo 68), Foster

NB: Carter, Sanderson, Maier, Lowe (Sharpley 69), Halpin,

Zane, Bennett, Thomas, Pryce, Sprod, Richie

ROUND 22

Friday 1 March

Newcastle Breakers 4 (Lowe 32, 75, Halpin 50, Bennett 88) South Melbourne 2 (Orlic 45, Damianos 89)

Venue: Breakers Stadium

Att: 2,621 Referee: G Connolly

NB: Carter, Sanderson, Roberts, Lowe, Maier, Halpin,

Bennett, Thomas, Pryce, Sprod, Richie

SM: Petkovic, Blatsis, Kuzmanovic, Panopoulos

(Damianos 63), Trimboli, Sherifovski (Baser 45), Petersen,

Knezevic (Curcija 45), Alsopp, Muscat, Oric

Yellow Cards: NB - Roberts, Halpin. SM - Blatsis

Saturday 2 March

Brisbane Strikers 3 (Brown 22, 44, Polak 24) UTS Olympic 1 (Tome 78)

Venue: Suncorp

Att: 5,113 Referee: S Micallef

BS: Bolton, Zoricich, Williams (Ditton 76), Hunter, Jackson, Farina (Tollenaere 83), Polak, Brown, Wright (News 60), T Cranney, Brayshaw

SO: Bouhoutsos, Barrett, Ciantar, Poimer (Gonzales 63),

Tsekenis, Tome, Trajanovski, Ardone, Meredith,

Blagojevic, Zelic (Augerinos 45)

Yellow Cards: BS - Zoricich, Jackson, Brayshaw. SO -

Barrett, Tome

Red Cards: SO - Ciantar

Sydney United 2 (Zdrilic 51, Patikas 75) Adelaide City 2 (Mori 41, Foster 78)

Venue: Croatian Sports Centre

Att: 3,257 Referee: J Fraser

SU: Crews, Trajkovski (Markovac 65 - Rudan 89),

Popovic, Babic, Enes, Milicic, Patikas, Zdrilic, S Babic

(Lamond 63), Bilokapic

AC: Petkovic, Yates, Ivanovic, Tobin, Mori, Hassell,

Gibson, Lozanovski (Brazzale 79), Armour, Mennillo (Perin

79), Foster

Yellow Cards: SU - M Babic, Markovac, Bilokapic. AC -

Gibson

Morwell Falcons 1 (Masi 36) Canberra Cosmos 1 (Lemezina 57)

Venue: Falcons Park

Att: 2,182 Referee: C Diomis

MO: Kourtis, Marcina, Canosa, Miller, Tapai, Sevin (Villani

79), Bothwell, Talladira (Stergiopoulos 63), Masi, Reda,

Douglas

CO: Mautone, Watson, Wade, Kelly, Perinovic, T

Popovich, Castro, Koch, Lemezina, Mazis, N Popovich

Yellow Cards: MO - Canosa, Tapai, Bothwell, Reda. CO -

Wade, Perinovic, T Popovich, Lemezina, N Popovich

Sunday 3 March

Melbourne Knights 1 (Spiteri 47) Wollongong City 0

Venue: Croatian Sports Centre

Att: 3,890 Referee: J Papanicolas

MK: Juric, Buljubasic, de Amicis (Kutlesovski 46),

Cervinski, Marth, Simunic, Spiteri, Lapsansky (Nastevski

86), Tiatto, Kovacevic, T Pondeljak

WW: Hughes, Horsley (Luff 76), Naumovski, Perinich,

Lloyd, Bonetig, Jermain (Petratos 76), O'Shea, Pollari,

Ceccoli (Gjakovski 63), Vrkic

Yellow Cards: MK - Simunic, Tiatto. WW - Lloyd, O'Shea,

Pollari

West Adelaide 11 (Tsekenis 2) Marconi-Fairfield 0

Venue: Hindmarsh Stadium

Att: 4,569 Referee: E Brazzale

WA: Blazincic, Slager, Hooker, Tibaldi, Iriarte, Aloisi,

Keramidas (Lekkas 82), Morrison, Tsekenis, Andrioli,

Thorp

MA: Catlin, Stanton (McDonald 70), Harper, Hristodoulou

(Angelucci 84), Maloney, Smith, Awaritefe, Souris,

Renaud, Longo, Zoric (Holst 45).

Yellow Cards: WA - Aloisi, Tsekenis. MA - Holst

The SOCCEROO Dream Team

by Inside Soccer Editor, BRUCE CAMPBELL

IT'S A subject which causes arguments all the time - and will do for ever more. Because realistically, you can never compare teams, or players, from different eras.

How could you compare Reg Date, who wore boots like a docker, with Robbie Slater, whose modern shoes are so light that they are more like a dancers in comparison.

Yet Reg Date, who few soccer fans in this country will know

can't compare players from different eras.

"All you can do as a player is be the best at the time.

"Surely, that is good enough."

A few years ago, when I was Editor of *Australian Soccer Weekly*, I ran a version of my own 'dream team' - although a few of the selections were deliberately designed to provoke comment.

But how do you judge such a selection?

Even '74 World

had them on the field in Munich!

What formation do you have?

And if you have a modern line up how can you possibly include players from a sweeper-less era?

But throughout Australian soccer history there have been stand-out players, and *Inside Soccer* takes great pleasure in listing some of them.

If we've missed anyone out then don't let us off the hook - write in and tell us!

'select'.

Ron Lord was the first of our top 'keepers.

Then Ron Corry took over that mantle. Scots-born Jackie Reilly, who I had the pleasure of watching in some of his all-too rare first team appearances at Hibernian, was the incumbent at Munich - and certainly worthy of a mention.

Terry Greedy was also class, as is Zeljko Kalac who still has time on his side to be the best of the best.

single week in the best league in the world Mark Bosnich gets the shirt.

If Mark hadn't played for Australia he would be a shoe-in for a Croatian cap and if he had any English blood at all then he would have been picked by England.

DEFENDERS

First big decision; which formation?

If you go for a three man back line, with flanking fullbacks, you might pick big Peter Wilson, the

stopper, and his partner in crime was current Marconi coach, Manfred Schaefer.

Manny wouldn't get my nod as the best stopper of all time - but he formed such a great partnership with 'Willie' that the pair write their own names.

Charlie Yankos was also reliability plus.

Attacking fullbacks might include Alan Davidson, ... Harry Williams or Dougie Utjesenovic.

But what about Tony Dorigo, the Leeds United and England defender?

He has been sheer class for over a decade.

Dougie Utjesenovic might also push for the sweeper's spot where both Ned Zelic and Paul Okon - two great talents of the future - just haven't done enough as yet to include them as 'greats'.

Milan Ivanovic is the other choice for the sweeper's spot.

MIDFIELD

This is Australia's real embarrassment because over the years we've just had an over-abundance of classy ball players.

If we go for a three man midfield then it would have to be balanced out with a ball winner.

Oscar Crino, Ray Baartz, Robbie

Slater, Jimmy MacKay, Aurelio Vidmar, Robbie Slater, Johnny Warren, Jimmy Rooney, Ray Richards; take your pick.

Or what about Liverpool star, Craig Johnston?

He is another of Australian soccer's forgotten men.

Maybe, like Dorigo, 'Johnno' didn't play much soccer here - but ask any sports journo to name their Top Ten and he'd be right up there.

We really have been well off in this department and the trend continues today.

FORWARDS

Dear, oh, dear. Just WHO do you leave out? I've only got two spots left and with my formation one has to be a target man.

His record speaks for itself so Reg Date must be right up there at the front of the queue - but what about this little lot; Adrian Alston, Otis Abonyi, Frank Farina, Davie Mitchell, Branko Buljevic, John Kosmina, Jimmy Patikas and Marshal Soper.

THE COACH

Rasic or Arok? They've both done so much. Could they work together - well they'd just have too, 'cause I've picked them!

much about was THE centre forward of his era - and a strong contender for any Socceroo Dream Team.

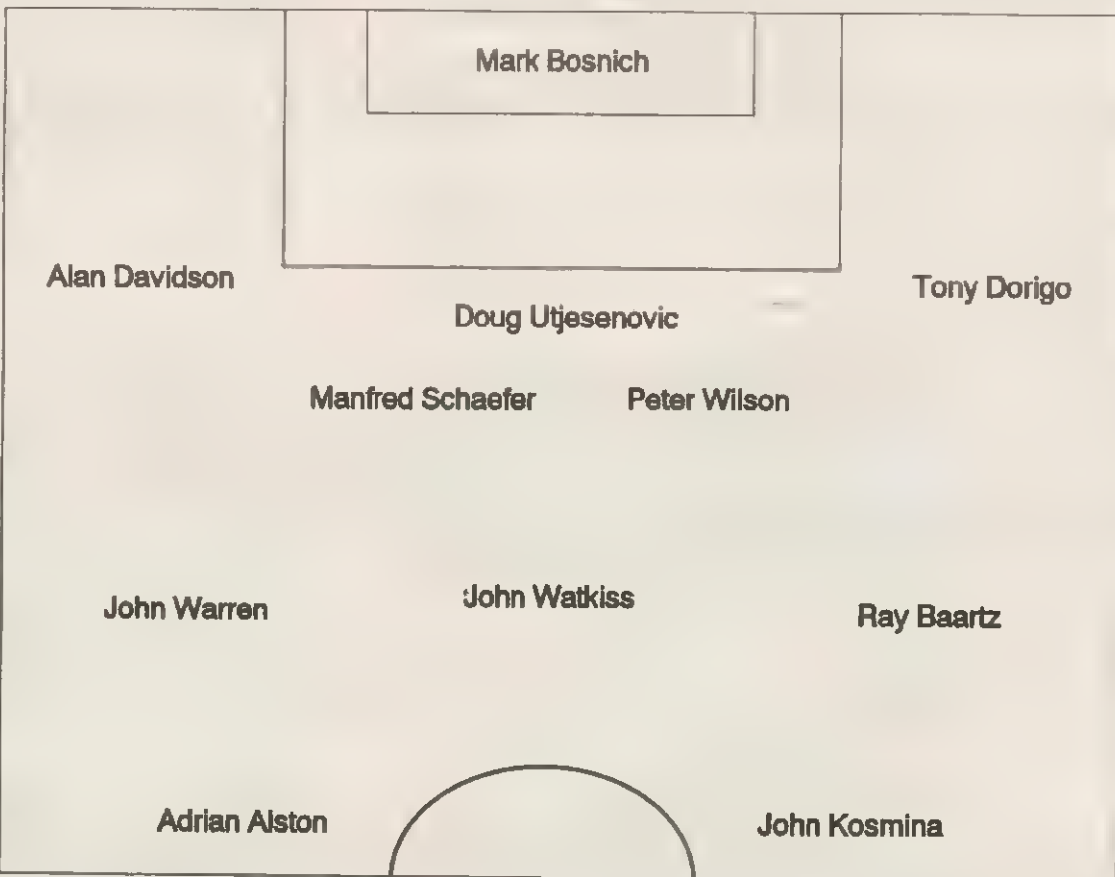
But that doesn't make the topical subject any less interesting.

Soccer writer Laurie Schwab has tossed the cat amongst the pigeons by producing an excellent publication called *Australian Soccer Greats*.

Lawrie's Dream Team misses out some of the biggest names in the Aussie game - and there is just a hint of Victorian bias as well!

"He has made a mistake," says Adrian Alston who was surprisingly not even named in Schwab's Top Fifty, "I should have been Number One!"

"But seriously, you



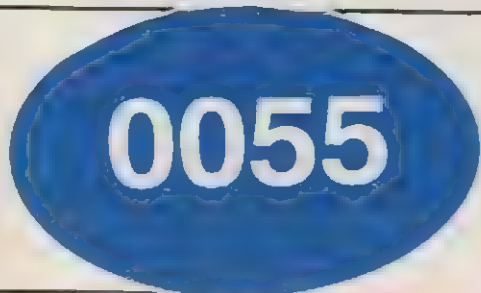
Cup coach Rale Rasic criticised some of the players I selected - and he

GOALKEEPER

The choices here are a bit more clear cut than elsewhere in my

But for sheer style, professionalism and the fact that he proves himself every

blond haired giant who led the Aussies at Munich. He was a rock of a



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ALAN MARNOCH was one of the greats of the 1960s – and here he goes up to win the ball in the air against Greece in 1969. This game was Australia's first ever win over a European based opponent at a time when Greece fielded a top rate team.

WHAT ABOUT *YOUR* DREAM TEAM?
we'll even give a special prize for the best
entry

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NATIONAL YOUTH LEAGUE

NORTHERN DIVISION

ROUND 23

Newcastle Breakers 0 UTS Olympic 2
AIS 3 Parramatta Eagles 1
Queensland Academy 0 Marconi-Fairfield 1
Sydney United 5 St George 2

NSL COLTS LEAGUE

NORTHERN DIVISION

ROUND 14

Central Coast 1 Adamstown Rosebud 0
Bonnyrigg eagles 1 Warringah Dolphins 3
Sydney united 1 Parramatta Eagles 2
Canterbury 0 Illawarra 3
Rockdale City 2 Sutherland 1
MacArthur 5 Leichhardt Tigers 0
Bankstown City 2 UTS Olympic 1

NSW SUPER LEAGUE

ROUND 5

St George 2 (Magiasis 2) Parramatta Eagles 1 (Surjan)
Bonnyrigg 1 (Ninkovic) Blacktown City 1 (Boudaher)
Adamstown Rosebud 3 (Buden 2, McGuire) MacArthur 1 (Wayward)
Illawarra 2 (McLaren, Murray) Canterbury 2 (Ilic, Raeburn)
Leichhardt 2 (Cleary, Segreto) Rockdale City 0
Warringah Dolphins 2 (Panetta, Etherington) Sutherland 2 (Bard, Lerond)
•ROUND 4
Blacktown City 2 Bankstown City 1
Central Coast 2 (Northam, Clark) Leichhardt Tigers 3 (Cleary 3)
Parramatta Eagles 1 (Reveley) Adamstown Rosebud 0
Canterbury 5 (Tsaousidis 2, Solidakis, Dounis, Jerkovic)
St George 2 (Karavatakis, McAusland)
Illawarra 0 Warringah 0
MacArthur 1 (McArdie) Bonnyrigg 2 (Nikolic, Gajic)
Rockdale City 0 Sutherland 2 (Bard)

VSF PREMIER LEAGUE

DOCKERTY CUP - Round 1

Thomastown Zebras 3 Fitzroy 0
Melbourne Warriors 10 Darebin 0
Oakleigh 1 Kailor Eagles 1
Altona Magic 8 Seaford United 0

Knox City 1 Sunbury 0
Moorabin 12 Springvale Condors 0

Port Melbourne 3 Sandringham 1
Essendon 13 North Reservoir 1
Sunshine 3 South Springvale 1
Melton 1 Albion Redsox 0
Cranbourne 3 Waverley City 1
Green Gully 6 Mitcham United 0
Regent Bulla 6 Geelong 0
North Geelong 4 Sunshine Park 0
Bell Park 3 Monbulk 2
East Richmond 1 Stonnington City 1
Yarraville 1 Box Hill 1
Geelong Rangers 1 Nunawading 1
Springvale City Vales 3 Berwick 0
Mooroolbark 4 Langwarrin 0
Altona East 2 Sunshine Heights 0
St Albans 9 Glenroy 1
Dandenong 3 Chelsea 3
Preston 3 North Coburg 0
Lalor 7 Shepparton 0
Kingston City 4 Eaglehawk 0
Westvale 5 Moreland City 1
Lalor 3 Westgate 2
Frankston 2 East Nunawading 1
Melbourne City 5 Keysborough 4
Western Suburbs 5 Balaarat Red Devils 0
Richmond 1 Endeavour United 0
Brunswick City 2 Diamond Valley 1
South Caulfield 4 Whittlesea United 2
Doncaster Rovers 3 Brandon Park 2
Williamstown 1 Altona City 1
Corio 3 North Geelong 1
Ringwood City 3 Werribee City 1
Clifton Hill 2 Warrigul United 1
Bentleigh 7 South Wantima 0
Mornington 4 Keon Park 0
Croydon City 5 South Werribee 1
Parkmore 1 Broadmeadows City 1
Pascoe Vale 3 Croxton 1
Glen Eira 5 North Glenroy 0
Banyule City 1 Braeside United 1

ACTSF

GEORGE CAMPBELL CUP

Juventus* 1 Canberra Olympic 1
* won on penalties a.e.t.

WOMENS SOCCER

MITCHELL CUP

ACT ITC 2 Sutherland 1

ERICSSON CUP

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Marconi Fairfield	23	13	5	5	42	25	44
UTS Olympic	23	13	5	5	43	29	44
Brisbane Strikers	23	12	5	6	39	24	41
Melbourne Knights	23	10	7	6	26	17	37
Sydney United	23	9	9	5	31	22	36
Adelaide City	23	10	5	8	43	30	35
West Adelaide	23	10	4	9	31	31	34
Morwell Falcons	23	8	5	10	27	41	29
South Melbourne	23	8	4	11	34	40	28
Canberra Cosmos	23	5	8	10	37	46	23
Newcastle Breakers	23	4	5	14	29	49	17
Wollongong City	23	4	2	17	21	49	14

* 3 points for a win, 1 point for a draw

NORTHERN YOUTH LEAGUE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
AIS	24	17	2	5	77	32	53
Marconi-Fairfield	22	17	1	4	69	16	52
Sydney United	22	15	0	7	49	28	45
ACT Academy	22	12	3	7	42	41	39
Wollongong City	22	11	3	8	47	44	36
UTS Olympic	22	10	5	7	45	29	35
Parramatta Eagles	23	8	6	9	40	40	30
Old Academy	21	9	2	10	50	34	29
Newcastle Breakers	23	7	3	13	35	48	24
Blacktown City	21	5	5	11	34	68	20
NSW ITC	21	3	0	18	22	76	9
St George	21	2	2	17	19	73	8

* 3 points for a win, 1 point for a draw

GRAHAM ARNOLD CUP

	P	W	SD	D	L	F	A	Pts
MacArthur Rams	14	10	2	0	2	33	12	34
Illawarra	13	9	2	0	2	30	12	31
Central Coast	15	7	4	0	4	32	30	29
UTS Olympic	15	9	0	1	5	20	9	28
Parramatta	13	7	3	0	3	21	21	27
Warringah	15	6	4	0	5	25	18	26
Bankstown	15	6	3	1	5	29	21	25
Rockdale City	15	7	1	0	7	25	27	23
Sydney United	15	4	5	0	6	21	20	22
Bonnyrigg	15	6	2	0	7	21	26	22
Leichhardt Tigers	15	5	2	0	8	16	32	19
Sutherland	13	4	1	0	8	21	24	14
Canterbury	14	4	0	0	10	13	32	12
Adamstown	15	1	1	0	13	14	37	5

NSW SUPER LEAGUE

	P	W	SD	D	L	F	A	Pts
Leichhardt Tigers	5	4	0	0	1	9	7	12
Adamstown Rose	5	3	0	1	1	11	6	10
Bonnyrigg	5	3	0	1	1	11	7	10
Parramatta	5	3	0	0	2	8	3	9
Warringah	5	2	0	3	0	8	3	9
Bankstown	5	3	0	0	2	9	5	9
Sutherland	5	2	0	3	0	6	4	9
Blacktown	5	2	0	2	1	9	6	8
Central Coast	5	1	0	2	2	8	9	5
Canterbury	5	1	0	2	2	11	14	5
St George	5	1	0	2	2	5	9	5
Illawarra	5	0	0	3	2	6	11	3
Rockdale City	5	0	0	1	4	4	14	1
MacArthur	5	0	0	0	5	2	9	0

3 points for a win, 2 for a score draw, 1 for a no score draw

VICTORIAN PREMIER LEAGUE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Melbourne Warriors	6	6	0	0	23	3	18
Sunshine	6	6	0	0	13	2	18
Altona	6	5	0	1	11	6	15
Bentleigh	6	4	0	2	9	6	12
Thomastown	6	3	2	1	8	6	11
North Geelong	6	3	1	2	8	8	10
Bulleen Lions	6	2	2	2	8	7	8
Green Gully	6	1	3	2	9	11	6
Springvale City	6	2	0	4	10	15	6
St Albans	6	1	1	4	6	9	4
Box Hill Inter	6	1	1	4	5	12	4
Port Melbourne	6	0	3	3	7	14	3
Fawkner	6	0	2	4	6	12	2
Albion	6	0	1	5	1	13	1

Statistics compiled by George Johnstone



SYDNEY UNITED midfielder star Robbie Enes in action against Canberra Cosmos at Bruce Stadium
PHOTO: Eric Piris

Women's soccer is tuning itself to the next century with

A Space To Rent

JEFF OLVER, Victorian Women's ITC coach
PHOTO Tony Gavradinas

by
JACKI HADDEN

SOCCEr for females has changed - and changed for the better.

One of the biggest, and deserved, criticisms of female soccer in the past was that the players were not athletes.

So the first impression that anybody watching the game for the first time was that

these players were not fit and, therefore, any analysis of skill was rejected by the perception of fitness levels.

This has changed and as photographs of female soccer players now show the game no longer has to disguise itself.

Now there are attractive feminine role models to attract spectators and, of more importance, potential players who may have been lured away to other sports.

The 'revolution' started in 1989 when Steve Darby took over as national coach.

Darby implemented long term fitness programmes and set new standards for female players.

Tracey Wheeler, the Australian goalkeeper who played through this change in approach said: "Steve set incredibly high standards for players."

"But most of all he was fair and consistent in these standards and dropped players who

did not make them.

"It was the first time I was treated like a goalkeeper, not like a girl who just played in goal."

"It was also incredibly hard work for all the players but, in reality, the girls who have stuck with this fitness regime eventually made it through to the World Cup in 1995."

Wheeler was one of the stars of the World Cup and is now rated in the top four goalkeepers in the world after her stand out performances - a classic example of how athleticism increases skill level.

The approach to the game by leading female players of that era, such as Jane Oakley, Moya Dodd, Alison Forman, Sarah Cooper and Anissa Tann, created a

flow-on effect through to state and club level.

Games played now at elite club level in the New South Wales WSL between teams such as Marconi and UTS Olympic are both fast and skilful. A leading Ericsson Cup coach when watching a game at this level really thought he was watching a National Youth League game.

This, combined with the introduction of elite coaches at all levels of the game, is making it unrecognisable.

Former Australian goalkeeper Jeff Olver is creating a metamorphosis in the game in Victoria and taking what was before an easy-beat state team into a force to be reckoned with, particularly at Youth



level.

Olver, never known to be a diplomat, but renowned for his honesty, confirms this.

"I wouldn't waste my time if players were not in love with the game," he told *Inside Soccer*.

"They also have to be prepared to work hard."

"My players have responded and are a credit to the sport."

"The staff that national coach Tom Sermanni has brought together for the ITC programme is top class and includes Greg Brown, Marc Jones,

Tony Walmsley, Mike Milovanovic and Kevin McCormack.

"It's great to be in such a forward thinking and progressive environment."

Another change was the concept of wearing a body suit which emerged when designer Martin Reusch convinced Anissa Tann to try one out for the World Cup in Sweden.

Reusch had thought that the Sydney Kings looked tremendous in their playing outfits and were marketing themselves really well.

He had also seen Tann play and thought that she was fit enough to be confident enough to wear the clothing.

Tann also had the playing ability and credibility amongst both male and female

players to carry off the concept.

But she was still initially doubtful simply because it was against the culture of the game although Tann realised that if female soccer was going to get that much needed media exposure then this was the way to go.

The body suit was a big hit with the media and gained exposure for Reusch in the national press as well as on TV.

But logistics made it impossible for the body

suit to be worn in the World Cup.

Anissa Tann, however, received a great deal of interest from her Marconi team mates and that pressured Reusch to create a new suit based on their ski designs in the club colours.

"There is definitely a space to rent on these suits," says Marconi player Kaye Yardin.

Worn with shorts over the top, the suits are very marketable and Anissa Tann refutes any suggestions that they are sexist.

"That is just rubbish," she says.

"Marconi has a great overall sponsor in Brescia and after watching Casino Salzburg on TV we saw that a marketing opportunity arose to

sell advertising space on the back of whatever equipment we wear.

"Both Marconi and Brescia were mature enough to allow us to try to sell the space on the equipment that Kaye will be advertising."

"It's 1996, it's a marketing concept and if Melissa Link and Kaye Yardin were not great players then we would not promote them."

"If the male game can have players like Awaritefe and Farina who are spunks then

why can't the female game?"

Vicki Juric, the AWSA Marketing Director, has fully endorsed the idea and believes that any idea which enhances the athletic image of the game is a winner.

Marconi are promoting a competition to find a new nickname for the women's team, one which is more appropriate than the Stallions.

"If any of *Inside Soccer's* readers can think up a new one then they can win either an autographed ball or a Reusch body suit," says Kaye Yardin.

"We are looking for young marketers with good ideas."

"We definitely have a space to rent."

ITALIAN TOUR DIARY

with Anissa Tann-Darby

Marconi go down in Lazio

MARCONI completed its third, and final, game of its Italian tour when it was defeated 3-2 by AFC Lazio.

Marconi's goals were scored by Jacki Hadden and Kirsty Smith in a very physical game which was played in front of a large crowd.

The referee allowed the players to get stuck into challenges that are often pulled up in Australia. After the game I asked him why he allowed so much physical play and he said: "Players are players on the pitch, you are only women off it."

The playing side of the tour concluded when we beat a Rome Youth representative team 5-1. This was a challenge for our younger players and 16-year-old Melissa Link was outstanding.

The tour has been a great success

for the club. It has been tremendous as pre-season training with the players either training or playing every day. This has been a new concept for everyone outside of the national team and the younger players now realise the levels to be reached. Our first taste of professionalism - albeit without the money

The Italian players were always well organised tactically and had a good understanding of team play which enabled them to keep the ball for long periods of play. They are brought up in the environment of total soccer which is what the Australian ITC programme is starting to develop amongst our own players.

On a social level the tour brought the team together as a group and the soccer fanatics were able to watch *Serie A* teams play and train and the

'shoppers' said that the shopping was also the best in the world.

The NSW WSL are also in for a surprise as most of the players bought boots coloured Marconi blue! The value of tours for team harmony is immense and I recently read that the first thing that Bobby Gould did when appointed manager of Wales was to arrange an 'away' game.

The sponsors of the tour, Brescia and Ram, would also be happy with the coverage that the local media gave us with a number of players involved in TV and radio interviews.

The media in Italy are fanatical about any soccer and were constantly requesting stories. Some of the stories are just like men's tours and, of course,

have to stay on the tour

A highlight of the trip was a visit to the Fiorentina *Serie A* training session. The session was very similar to what I have seen at Marconi, UTS Olympic or the Socceroos. But the big difference was the intensity as every player, including current hero Gabriel Batistuta, has to compete for a place. The shooting practices that Batistuta undertook were similar to the ones that I have seen Kris Trajanovski perform. The other difference was, of course, the quality of facilities that they had to train on - possibly only the AIS could match this type of facility.

With our season just around the corner things are looking good for Marconi - maybe this is going to be the best season ever.

"Like men's tours - a lot of the stories will have to stay on tour"



TONY PEZZANO: swapping the gloves for the blackboard

He just doesn't know how to lose

TWENTY YEARS ago I had the good fortune of coaching a team which had a goalkeeper who just didn't know how to lose.

He goes by the name of Tony Pezzano.

I'd heard about him from another winner, and a good friend of mine, Jock Morlando.

But I didn't really appreciate the man until he'd played about half a dozen games for us.

During this period my team had all learned the same thing - that other teams should never

score against us.

It's history now that my club, Port Kembla, went on to win everything on offer in Illawarra - with and without Tony Pezzano.

But a big part in all of that was down to him.

He played twenty games for us and only let in eight goals which is a great achievement.

Now at Port Kembla we only try to sign quality players with that professional attitude and confidence that Tony gave us - especially at the back.

Tony Pezzano is now coaching Leichhardt Tigers in the NSW

Super League and is again doing great things with the very young side that he has.

As Tony explained to me: "Leichhardt are a progressive Super League club with good sponsors.

"But ~~on~~ own National League aspirations are further down the track.

"When we make the National League again we want to be a success.

"I'm a winner and I only want to be associated with winners (actually I think that that was the reason he joined Port Kembla!).

"I joined the Tigers

only a week after I finished as goalkeeper coach with Marconi and I realised after my first short spell at the club that to be a coach these days you really have to be something of a sports psychologist

"It is so important to understand the young players and their needs.

"Some young players can't take the old fashioned toughening up period of top flight soccer - but that doesn't mean that they won't make it.

"We should never discard talent without really trying something new to bring it out of



"I'm a winner and I only want to be associated with winners"

them."

Pezzano has also been around the traps long enough to be able to qualify his statements and was maybe unlucky enough to be in Socceroo contention when Terry Greedy was at his best - something which limited his own appearances for Australia to just five - even although he made his Sydney City NSL debut at the ripe old age of sixteen.

The lack of recognition given to former players is a sore point with the man who has strong opinions about the game at the top level, opinions that he shares with confidence.

"Personally I believe that we should still have imports playing in the Ericsson Cup," he says.

"It is so important for the youngsters to play alongside someone who is a professional and who has played professional soccer throughout his career.

"On that note I applaud Marconi for trying to bring players from overseas, Italy especially, as it really makes the difference.

"Not just in results, because sometimes they are hard to come by - but what comes later from our own players because they only have good habits after that.

"As for my ideas as a coach, I tell my players

to play a certain way.

"If they listen and we win then they deserve all of the praise, not me.

"If they listen and we lose, then I take all of the blame because there is no way I can blame them for playing my way if they have a bad result.

"But I definitely don't tolerate anyone who won't listen."

"The game is uncomplicated so let's play the game as it should be played and give the supporters something to enjoy."

"The punters are not mugs - they will appreciate good stuff, and they will appreciate good players."

If you have ever spent time with Tony Pezzano you will realise that he really loves the game.

He has played at the highest level and has achieved everything

that the game has to offer and now he is heading the same way as a coach.

I predict that he will be a huge success.

In my opinion he can't fail.

Tony, there is definitely a role for you in Australian soccer - be it in coaching or in administration.

I can only thank you once again for the time that you put into my club, Port Kembla, and for the knowledge and enthusiasm that you gave us - we won't talk about how many saves that you had to make to achieve that, though!

Good luck for the future Tony - I look forward to seeing you in the big league and to all our readers, remember I told you first - in *Inside Soccer*.

SEE you next time,
Noddy

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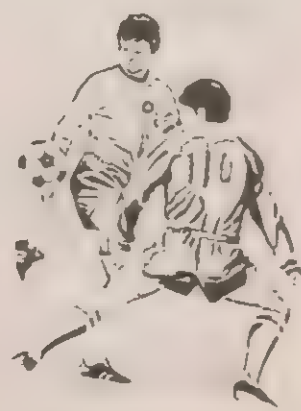
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..... the BIG stories, the BIG names

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Limiting mistakes

WHAT DOES a first season player coach do when he isn't playing well?

Easy – just ask, Lawrie McKinna who is facing up to his debut season with Hills United as a coach.

"That's easy," says the Scot who was once a pro with Kilmarnock, "I just substitute myself."

"But that has problems too, because you're no sooner off the field than you start to see the silly things that the guys are doing wrong."

"And once you are off you don't have as much control."

This season

A LOOK AT HILLS UNITED

McKinna, who is also a rep for sportswear company Asics is making a brave step into the mysterious world of coaching.

"It's a big trial for me," he admits honestly.

"I don't know if I'm cut out for it but I'm going to do my best."

"So far, so good." To test the striker cum coach out he has assembled a Hills United side which is sprinkled with youth and experience.

None of the players are paid but the facilities at Fred Caterson Park are good enough to make the

players feel professional.

"We have to believe in ourselves," adds McKinna.

"I've got Randall Easthorpe, Davie Batten – who has been at every club in the world three times – and Andrew Brockbank."

"They supply the experience but Davie isn't always available for selection because of his other commitments and that's pretty much the case with Andrew as well."

"We've also got Brian Brown, who used to play with Melbourne Juventus, her and he is helping out a lot too."

"But the club is well sponsored and we have to aim for the top."

"Everybody in the First Division wants to beat Sydney Cosmos – so that is going to make it all the tougher for them."

"But I'd have to be honest and say that if we don't make the finals then I'd be disappointed."

"They've spent over \$200,000 on the amenities at the ground so we have to do our best on the park."

"I tell the players that they have to be competitive, they have to limit their mistakes – and if the team can do that then we will do will."



THIS season all three Sydney clubs have featured prominently in the Ericsson Cup – which has seen big crowds flocking back to Sydney derbies. Here photographer CON POULOS captured all of the action when Mark Babic and Francis Awaritefe clashed in the west Sydney derby.

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Morwell Falcons Falcon Soccer

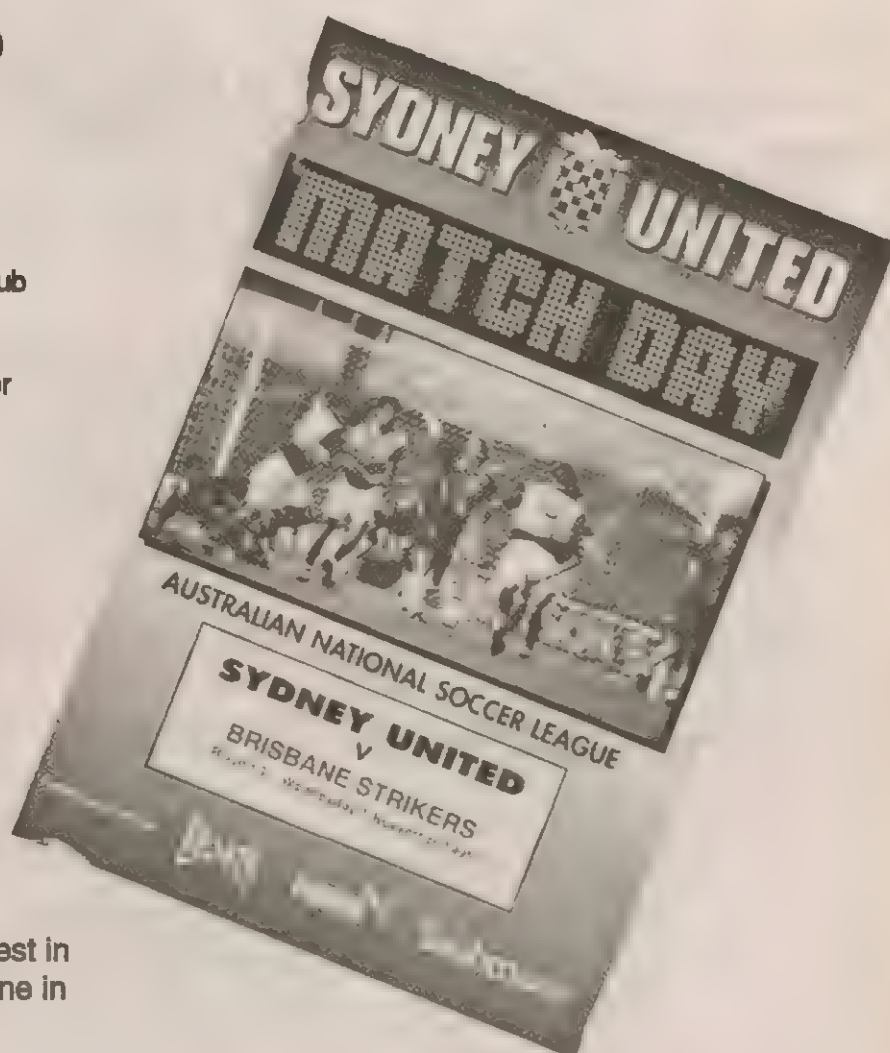
South Melbourne's In Blue & White

Marconi-Fairfield's Marconi Football

Kookaburra Rugby

and that's just in a year!

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ENQUIRIES: Bruce Campbell (06) 299 2232

Gray says no to Canberra Super League question

SUPER LEAGUE days for former champions Inter Monaro

NSWSF President Peter Gray has knocked back the possibility of a Canberra re-entry to the Super League - but maybe only temporarily.

"I don't think we can see a Canberra team in again at the moment," he said.

"They (the ACTSF) have so many internal problems and until they can settle those problems I couldn't see a Canberra return.

"But Canberra is surrounded by New South Wales and we will be looking at the kids who live in Queanbeyan and make sure that they get a fair go in whatever the set-up is."

When Canberra Metros played in the Super League they did so on a 'franchise' from the ACTSF - a situation which caused a lot of problems when the Metros were dumped two years ago.

Queanbeyan based Monaro have also played in the NSW Super League and, in an ironic twist, they actually play in the ACTSF competition with the blessing of the NSWSF.

Monaro are also past NSW Champions which might suggest that they are a good bet to eventually pick up that status sometime in the future.

"Anything is a possibility," answered Gray when posed with that question.

"But you must remember that the team which represents the ACT in our competition must do so through the ACTSF which holds the franchise."

Over ten years ago the Southern New South Wales league ran effectively - covering teams from Canberra, Griffith, Queanbeyan and even down to



Albury. The possibility of such a set-up happening again is always there, something which Peter Gray conceded some time ago.

Then he set his Federation's immediate objectives as starting a semi-pro league in the west of the state, which has happened, and bringing the senior

federation under the same umbrella as the NSW Amateur and Northern NSW Federations - and that has also happened.

The next stage for the NSWSF is the setting up of a regional style country based competition similar to the Group system of Rugby League.

That could well see

the re-birth of the Southern New South Wales League

Many in the Canberra area believe that an expansion into that type of Southern NSW set up is the only way forward. At the same time there are still parties interested in a return to the Sydney based Super League as the winter alternative to

ACT Premier League soccer.

A couple of seasons back the Hanwood club from Griffith applied for membership of the ACT Premier League but were turned down.

At present there are five NSW clubs playing ACT based soccer; Goulburn, Cooma, Queanbeyan City, Monaro and Warandilla.

Shark signs for Juve

WEST ADELAIDE reserve keeper, Tony Giannasca, has signed on loan for ACT Premier League side Juventus.

"We have signed him for a nominal fee," said president Giulio Domenici.

"Tony played last year under the same conditions and was a big success."

The highly rated Giannasca's progress at West Adelaide was hindered first by a serious shoulder injury and then by the outstanding form of Peter Blazincic.

But his first game back for Canberra Juventus saw him turn in a blinder - making a string of saves and then three penalty shoot out saves to see his side land the George Campbell Cup, the first major trophy of the ACT season.

Giannasca had earlier been a target for Canberra Cosmos who had baulked at the West Adelaide asking price of \$10,000.



The 'no name' coach

VINCE MAGLIULO has hit out at the club that dumped him, claiming his reputation as a 'no name' coach has done him no favours.

"When I was at Weston Creek we had no star players," he says, "yet we did very well."

"We even produced a State goalkeeper for the ACT."

"But I was shocked when I found out that Juventus had dumped me."

"We had a deal which I thought was agreed to - but I don't want to be at a club where I'm not wanted."

Magliulo's deal was done with Juventus last year but he was sensationally dumped a few weeks ago when Walter Valeri was instead given the job.

Now the disillusioned coach has taken up the post at newly promoted club, Queanbeyan City - and is determined to prove a few people wrong.

"I think I suffer from being a 'no name' coach," he says.

"But I can do a good job."

"I've done it in the past and I'm confident that Queanbeyan will do well this season."

"We have some very talented youngsters in the side and the club will also play at Riverside Stadium, the old Marco Polo ground."

"It's going to be difficult for us because we have got a lot to do as a promoted club but the committee is right behind me and we are very determined."



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The boy is class

"HE IS one of the best players about," says Rockdale coach Rale Rasic.

"What an attitude, he is a great player to coach - the boy is class."

That is how Rasic describes Stephane Jee, a player who has certainly been around without maybe really hitting the high spots.

A couple of seasons ago he was snapped up by then Morwell

"I couldn't believe that someone who had just come back from Southampton couldn't get a club in the NSL."

Falcons coach Bobby McLachlan.

"I'd read an article in *Champion Soccer*," said McLachlan, "and couldn't believe that

someone who had just come back from Southampton couldn't get a club in the NSL.

"So we brought him down to Morwell and

Stephane did a good job for me."

At the end of that season, however, the midfielder moved back to Sydney and after a spell with Blacktown City is now under the guidance of the former Socceroo coach at Rockdale.

"You know when you have a good player," says Rasic.

So far Rasic hasn't managed to get his team on a roll but he is confident that that will come.

"We have a lot of good players at this club," he says.

"The facilities are also first class and it is a matter of time before everything comes together.

"You don't build a team overnight."

One visitor from the Ericsson Cup who has been equally impressed by the facilities at the Suns ground is Steve Darby, assistant coach at UTS Olympic.



"They've got a really nice set-up," he says.

"Everything looks really great - they've got a better facility than some Ericsson Cup clubs."

Like a lot of clubs in the Super League, Rockdale also share ambitions of eventual Ericsson Cup status - but Rasic says that that is still in the future.

"There is a lot of work

to be done first," he says.

"But this club has what it takes - NSL is a possibility here because we have such a good catchment area also."

For 25-year-old Stephane Jee there is still time for another crack at the Ericsson Cup.

The former AIS player made his NSL debut away back in

1989 with Blacktown City but there are enough people in the game who think he still has the ability to cause an impact.

Rale Rasic hopes that it will be with Rockdale City - with the St George-based club maybe making a climb up to the Ericsson Cup sometime in the future.

Wolves & Bears set to fight it out

SOCCER in Northern New South Wales gets underway again next weekend with the start of the NBN First Division.

This season sees games being split up and played on various days in the ten team division.

"It looks like a really good competition," says NBN League Operations manager, Alan Nisbet.

"Soccer is always a major sport in this area and we expect this to be one of our best competitions for some time."

The Grand Final is set down for 25 August and 1995 Premiers Highfield Wolves are again expected to be a major force.

The Wolves are coached by Steve Bland.

Grand Final champions Weston Workers Bears will also be out for a repeat of last season and are under coach Keith Harris.

"We are once again running our midweek Knockout Cup, the Arctic Cup," says Alan Nisbet.

"We're also staging a North v South match next month and then there is the Steel Cities challenge against Illawarra on Monday 25 May.

"This year the game will be played in Wollongong at Brandon Park."

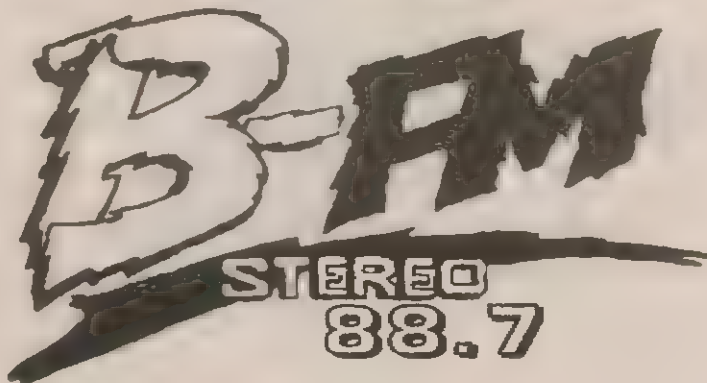
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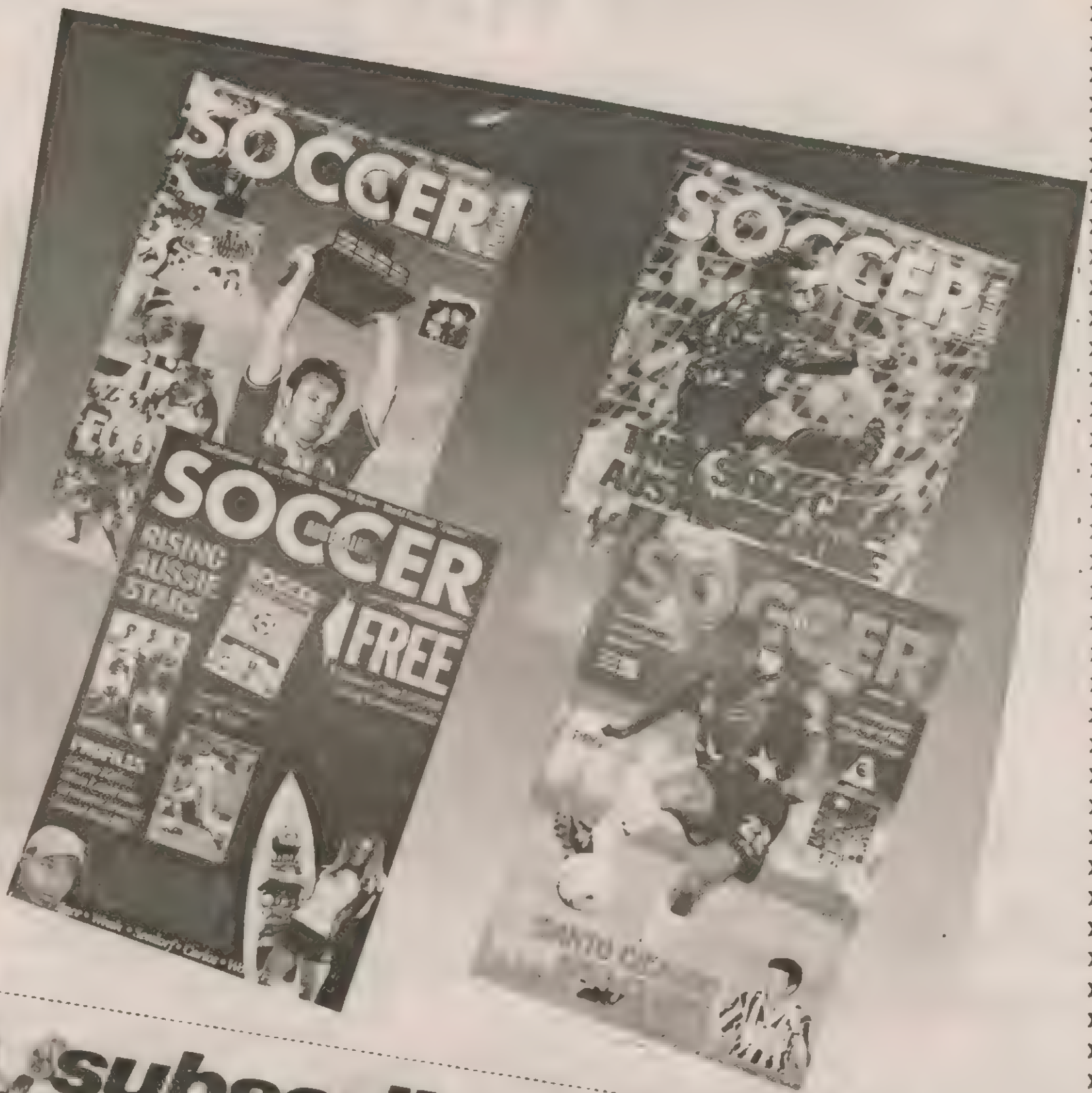
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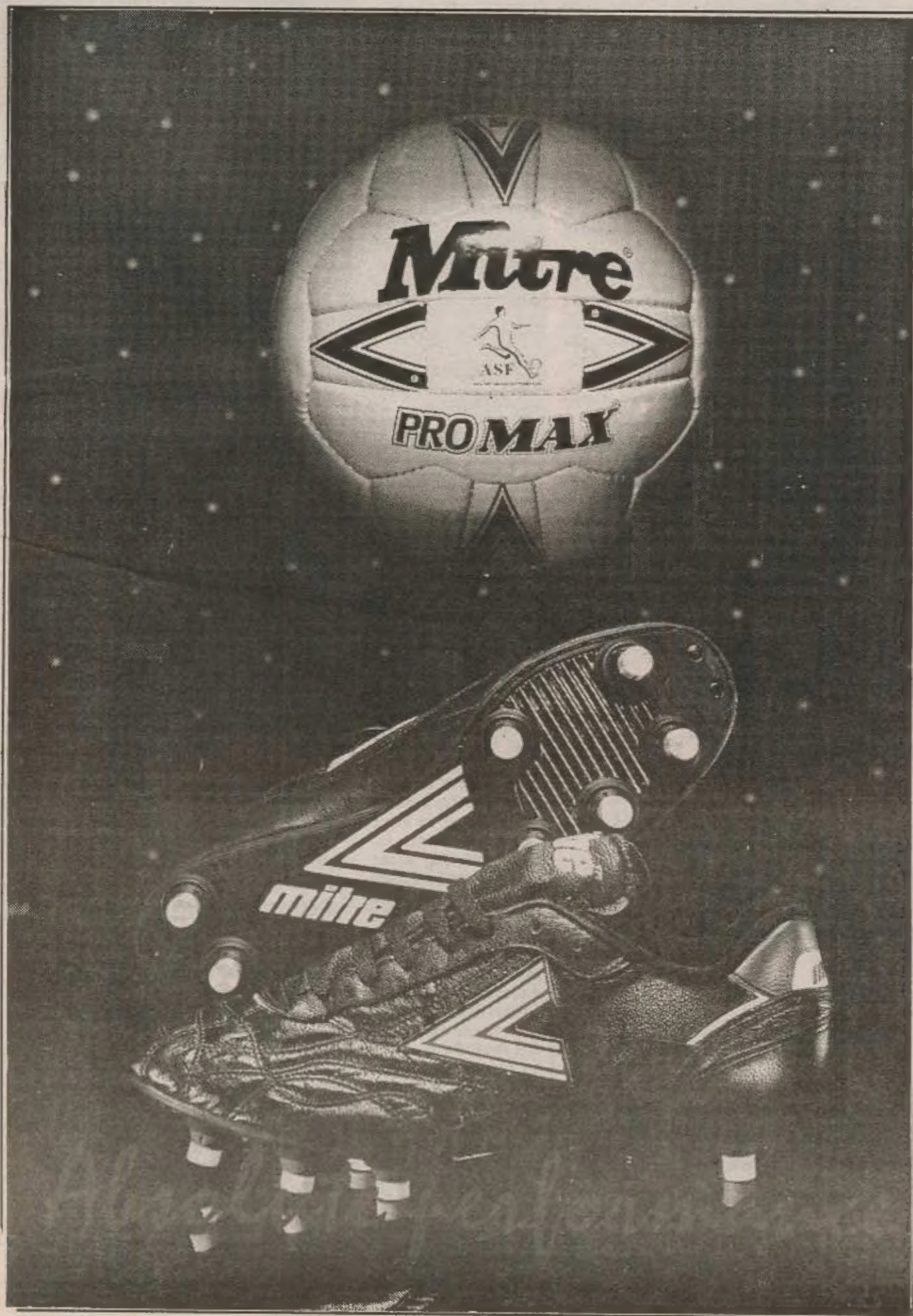
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COMMENCES SUNDAY MARCH 17



What the action is

Tuesday March 12

ERICSSON CUP

Marconi-Fairfield v Newcastle Breakers

West Adelaide v Brisbane Strikers

Wednesday March 13

ERICSSON CUP

Canberra Cosmos v Sydney United

Wollongong City v Adelaide City

UTS Olympic v Melbourne Knights

Thursday March 14

NSWSF WOMENS SL1

ITC Penrith v Fairfield Bulls

Friday March 15

ERICSSON CUP

Newcastle Breakers v West Adelaide

Saturday March 16

ERICSSON CUP

Canberra Cosmos v Wollongong City

Morwell Falcons v UTS Olympic

NSW SUPER LEAGUE

Central Coast v Bonnyrigg

Sutherland Sharks v Leichhardt Tigers

Adamstown Rosebud v Blacktown City

NSWSF DIVISION 1

Mt Druitt v Belmore Hercules

Hills United v Dulwich Hill

Sunday March 17

ERICSSON CUP

Adelaide City v South Melbourne

Melbourne Knights v Marconi-Fairfield

Sydney United v Brisbane Strikers

NSW SUPER LEAGUE

MacArthur v St George

Parramatta Eagles v Illawarra Lions

Canterbury v Warringah Dolphins

Rockdale City v Bankstown

NSWSF DIVISION 1

Stanmore Hawks v Penrith Panthers

Southern Minotaurs v Auburn United

Ryde City v West Wanderers

Sydney Cosmos v Mt Pritchard

Bathurst '75 v Fairfield Bulls

ACTSF - MAYOR'S CUP

Monaro v Queanbeyan City

NSWSF WOMENS SL1

Blacktown City v Gladesville Ravens

Sydney Cosmos v Marconi

St George v UWS MacArthur

Wednesday March 20

ERICSSON CUP

South Melbourne v Morwell Falcons

Friday March 22

ERICSSON CUP

Wollongong City v Sydney United

NORTHERN NSW

Deloraine Eagles v Highfields Wolves

Saturday March 23

ERICSSON CUP

Brisbane Strikers v Newcastle Breakers

Marconi-Fairfield v Morwell Falcons

NSW SUPER LEAGUE

Adamstown Rosebud v Central Coast

St George v Blacktown City

Bonnyrigg v Rockdale City

NSWSF DIVISION 1

Penrith Panthers v Hills United

NORTHERN NSW

Cessnock Hornets v Maitland Magpies

Wallsend Red Devils v Bluebells

Sunday March 24

ERICSSON CUP

South Melbourne v Canberra Cosmos

UTS Olympic v Adelaide City

West Adelaide v Melbourne Knights

NSW SUPER LEAGUE

Illawarra Lions v MacArthur Rams

Canterbury v Parramatta eagles

Bankstown City v Sutherland

Warringah Dolphins v Leichhardt Tigers

NSWSF DIVISION 1

Auburn United v Stanmore Hawks

Ryde City v Southern Minotaurs

Mt Pritchard v West Wanderers

Fairfield Bulls v Sydney Cosmos

Dulwich Hill v Mt Druitt Town

Bathurst '75 v Belmore Hercules

NORTHERN NSW

Pasminco v Weston Workers

Hamilton Warriors v Broadmeadow Magic

NSWSF WOMENS SL1

Sutherland Sharks v Blacktown City

UWS MacArthur v Marconi

St George v Fairfield Bulls

ITC Penrith v MacQuarie District

Wednesday March 27

INTERNATIONAL

Scotland v Australia

* ALL events believed to be correct at time of going to press from information supplied.

This is a FREE service for any match or soccer event (FAX your details on 06 299 2332) or special advertising rates are also on offer to registered soccer clubs.

Dempsey backs Oceania

THE Oceania Football Confederation has recently taken a severe pounding in the Australian press.

It has been repeatedly lashed from nearly all corners of the press.

So much so that you might just expect that OFC president Charlie Dempsey would wither away from this media blitz – but far from it.

Instead the expatriate Scot, who now calls Auckland home, has a mission; to bring to his organisation the sort of respectability that will make World Cup qualification easier

for its member countries – preferably with Australia's help.

Along the way he first has to convince the Aussies that OFC is where its future lies.

"Australia has never

The Pacific nations confederation has survived an army of attacks – but now Charlie Dempsey has played his trump card to win the war

really been kind to Oceania," he says.

"Australia has always thought that it should be in Europe or Asia and we have had to deal with the trauma of that over the years."

"But the day has come when Australia has got to take a more active part in Oceania."

One of Dempsey's big recent successes was the recognition that the winner of the OFC Championships should be represented at the Intercontinental Cup in Riyadh.

Part of that strategy, which including a bit of cunning fox play, was to get the Aussies to play New Zealand in a home and away series last year.

Now Australia, as winners of that elimination, will go on to play Tahiti, the winners of the

Melanesian / Polynesian section, for the Sir William Walkley Cup – and a place at Riyadh with the real big names of world football.

That at least propels some sort of meaning-

fulness into games which have never really been treated seriously in the past.

The Intercontinental Championships will be played every two years which fits in well with Dempsey's vision for an Oceania Championship.

And while it doesn't

have the competitive level of a European or South American Championship it at least gives the ten member countries extra international exposure.

"We also have got

direct entry (from the Oceania qualification series) into the Under 17 World Championship and also the Under 20 World Championship," Dempsey points out.

"We play the third team in CONCACAF for entry to the Olympics and now the

fourth team in Asia for entry to the World Cup.

"Some people say that OFC should have direct entry to the world cup but when it was discussed at FIFA level the general opinion was that that meant direct entry for Australia."

"But I still think that that half entry is still a hell of a lot better than going to Canada and Argentina."

"If whoever wins the Oceania section can't beat the fourth best team in Asia then they don't deserve to be in the World Cup finals."

"But I'll still try to get Oceania direct entry for the World Cup at the next meeting but I don't give myself a lot of chance on that one because there is a bit of a war on between Asia and CONCACAF for that extra half place."

"This time Asia got it. Everyone recognises that Australia is on the up and up and that is why a lot of the Asian countries aren't keen on you being there."

Other than reviving an OFC Championship Dempsey also has other items on his agenda, like sending his coaching staff around member countries to improve their awareness and knowledge.

OCEANIA

The Oceania Confederation membership consists of

Australia (54)
Cook Islands (N/A)
Fiji (140)
New Zealand (102)
Papua New Guinea (N/A)
Solomon Islands (170)
Tahiti (155)
Tonga (N/A)
Vanuatu (179)
Western Samoa (N/A)

* latest FIFA rankings included in brackets. Countries which have been inactive since the rankings were introduced in 1990 are not listed.

Studs Up

the Australian fans' perspective



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"Australia has never really been kind to Oceania – it has always thought that it should be in Europe or Asia."

long serving representative, Sir Arthur George.

They include the placing of prominent Oceania persons to FIFA committees like John Constantine (World Youth Championships), Josephine King (Women's) and Dr Sahu Khan (Legal).

member confederation.

"In 1990 Dr Havelange came with a big committee to demolish Oceania."

"Before that people in Australia had been saying for years that OFC was finished."

"But Asia had knocked Australia's membership to the AFC



CHARLIE DEMPSEY: outfoxed everybody to get Oceania recognised at the Intercontinental Championships

back before.

"I had a meeting in Sydney and told the AFC secretary Peter Velappan that if we were going anywhere it would be into CONCACAF because they were closer to us.

"But that has all gone by the boards and I hope that we will soon be fully recognised.

"We have been doing everything that was expected of us as a confederation

including holding competitions, doing courses and having people on various committees.

"All of a sudden Oceania is becoming fashionable and a lot of the people who were opposing our status a few years ago, like Velapaan, are no longer there."

But maybe Charlie Dempsey's biggest achievement, and the one which might yet be

the trump card in FIFA full confederation status, is the Sir William Walkley Cup.

The admittance of the winner of the Oceania Championship to the Intercontinental Championship is a master stroke and one which will undoubtedly finally get Charlie Dempsey the level of Australian support that he has fought so hard and long for.

□

Football defies Khmer Rouge

CAMBODIA is to launch a national league competition - despite the civil war which is still raging in the country.

Because of the influence of the rebel Khmer Rouge faction the league will not represent all regions but it is expected to be a success, nevertheless, and has attracted considerable commercial sponsorship.

FIFA has also recently sent assistance to Cambodian football in the form of instructors whose role was to train Cambodian coaches,

administrators and sports-medicine personnel.

Cambodia made its long awaited return to international football at the SEA Games but still have a long way to go in terms of even Asian success.

They have also entered for the 1998 World Cup in France but have lost out in the lucky stakes by being included in a pre-qualifying group which includes Asian favourites Uzbekistan and highly-rated Indonesia.

□

Sea Games medal spurs on Vietnam

FOOTBALL in Vietnam is very definitely on the way back after the country's recent, and surprising, silver medal success in the South East Asian (SEA) Games in Thailand.

Despite the fact that Vietnam went down 0-4 to hosts Thailand in the final their runners-up place has restored a great deal of national pride in the sport.

On their way to the final Vietnam, coached by German Heinz Weigang, knocked over more fancied sides Malaysia and Myanmar.

The SEA Games are very highly regarded in Asian sport and the soccer event is taken particularly seriously.

The failure of the Malaysian team to get past the early stages was seen in that country as a national disaster, although hardly surprising after the decimation of the national team in the wake of the bribery and corruption scandals.

Once regarded as one of the stronger sides in Asian football Vietnam has been overtaken in the last decade by rivals such as Japan, Korea and Malaysia and before the SEA Games had plummeted to 156th place in the FIFA world rankings.

But their SEA Games outing has seen them jump a massive thirty four places up to 122nd by the end of the year.

The Weigang inspired success came after an extensive three month full time preparation which included a tour of Germany and Switzerland.

In the SEA Games tournament the Vietnamese keeper Nguyen Van Cuong was something of an enigma - earning great acclaim for his talent but also widespread condemnation for his cynical charges on forwards.

In the semi final Nguyen only stayed on the field because of some typically atrocious Asian refereeing.

"Our success was a team effort," says Weigang.

"We had a lot of very young players but they were by no



SEA GAMES: Silver medal success for Vietnam

means beginners."

Last season the recently reorganised Vietnamese First Division consisted of fourteen clubs and top games drew crowds of up to 20,000.

The League is played on the Japanese style of penalty shoot outs in the event of a draw, something which suits the Vietnamese mentality very well.

The problem of distance is also catered for by playing American style road trips.

The League is regarded as a huge success with full time

football the norm and clubs heavily sponsored from companies, generally within the tobacco and drink industries.

Even Vietnam's top players are starting to attract attention from overseas with midfielder Nguyen Hong Son being the subject of interest from several Bundesliga clubs, not surprising given the connection with coach Karl-Heinz Weigang.

Abdul Jalil

(information & photo courtesy FIFA)

Australia has a hundred percent record against Vietnam, having played them twice (both times in Saigon) and winning each 1-0. In 1972 a Branko Buljevic goal sealed the victory which was part of Australia's undefeated Asian tour. In 1967 the Aussies won in front of 30,000 and that victory set them on the way to a Saigon International Tournament final show-down with South Korea, the 3-2 win being Australia's first ever tournament success.

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